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1915

MACHIAVELLI

A DRAMA

BY

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Author of Six Dramas of American Romance
and History

The Secretary of State

Financier of New York

Abraham Lincoln, or The Rebellion

Otomis, the Indian of Mexico

The Third Term

King of Wall Street

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THE SCHULTE PRESS
132 East Twenty-third Street
New York, N. Y.

Players Stage Parlance

"Technical names" used by dramatic players, to denote the places for coming on, or going off, the "stage," and for locations of, and movements of, players while on it.

These technical names, appear throughout this play of "Machiavelli," in order to give the reader an object lesson of their actual use; but ordinarily they are only put in the manuscripts from which the players study their parts. For the sake of brevity, these technical names are always represented by their "initials" only. If at any time you are in doubt about the meaning of these "initials"—you can refer to this table.

"Entrances" or "Exits" (for they are all the same) of the Theatre Stage, are designated as follows:

On the "Right" side of stage, there are 4 entrances or exits—one through each of the three wings, and one back of them called "upper." And on the "Left" side of stage, there are 4 just the same. Here are the technical names:

Right 1 Entrance.	Front of first wing.
Right 2 Entrance.	Front of second wing.
Right 3 Entrance.	Front of third wing.
Right Upper Entrance.	Back of wings.
Left 1 Entrance.	Front of first wing.
Left 2 Entrance.	Front of second wing.
Left 3 Entrance.	Front of third wing.
Left Upper Entrance.	Back of wings.

Please bear in mind, that the "Right" and "Left" are the right and left of the audience, and not of the players.

When the "Wings" are turned into "Walls" (the location of the wings being still remembered) these very same technical names are used to designate the entrances or exits by "door"—excepting the "upper" which is now changed to "back" (meaning the back wall). The names used for doors in this are as follows:

Back 1 Entrance.	In back wall, right side.
Back 2 Entrance.	In back wall, centre.
Back 3 Entrance.	In back wall, left side.

"Locations" and "Movements" of the players, while "on" the stage are designated as follows:

The stage is occupied practically all the time, by a person—persons—group—groups; any, or all of these at the same time; and they are either on the stage when the curtain goes up, (technically called "discovered") or they come on afterwards. These players are "stationary" sometimes—"moving" sometimes—and sometimes both. Let us now mention the technical names used to denote their "places" on the stage, and their "movements" from place to place on it.

For this purpose the stage is divided into four "indefinite" points as follows: "down"—"up"—"right"—"left." He comes "Down"—means that he comes to the footlights.

He goes "Up"—means that he goes to the rear. He crosses "Right"—means that he goes to the right. He crosses "Left"—means that he goes to the left.

Besides these, there are nine "definite" points, as follows:

Centre 1.	—in the centre at footlights.
Centre 2.	—in the centre of the stage.
Centre 3.	—in the centre at rear.
Right 1.	—on the right at footlights.
R. ht 2.	—on the right at middle.
Right 3.	—on the right at rear.
Left 1.	—on the left at footlights.
Left 2.	—on the left at middle.
Left 3.	—on the left at rear.

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He goes to "Centre 1" (or whichever point may be used)—means that he removes to that point. And "Centre 1" (or whichever point may be used) put after a player's name, or any article on the stage, means that the player, or the article, stands at that point. These names are also represented by their "initials" only.

Alphabetical arrangement of the "Initials" of these "technical names"—for handy reference.

ENTRANCES AND EXITS.

B. 1. E.	for Back First Entrance—in back, wall right side.
B. 2. E.	" Back Second Entrance—in back wall, centre.
B. 3. E.	" Back Third Entrance—in back wall, left side.
L. 1. E.	" Left First Entrance—front of first wing.
L. 2. E.	" Left Second Entrance—front of second wing.
L. 3. E.	" Left Third Entrance—front of third wing.
L. U. E.	" Left Upper Entrance—back of wings.
R. 1. E.	" Right First Entrance—front of first wing.
R. 2. E.	" Right Second Entrance—front of second wing.
R. 3. E.	" Right Third Entrance—front of third wing.
R. U. E.	" Right Upper Entrance back of wings.

Whether the stage is set with "wings" or "walls" can be determined, by reference to the descriptive matter at the beginning of each scene.

LOCATION AND MOVEMENTS.

D.	for Down—at the footlights.
L.	" Left—at the left side.
R.	" Right—at the right side.
U.	" Up—at the rear.
C. 1.	" Centre One—in the centre at footlights.
C. 2.	" Centre Two—in the centre of stage.
C. 3.	" Centre Three—in the centre at rear.
L. 1.	" Left One—on the left at footlights.
L. 2.	" Left Two—on the left at middle.
L. 3.	" Left Three—on the left at rear.
R. 1.	" Right One—on the right at footlights.
R. 2.	" Right Two—on the right at middle.
R. 3.	" Right Three—on the right at rear.

In plays where the locations of, and the movements of, the players, are attempted to be described, it is customary to give the technical terms where they are essential; in other cases the marks are omitted for fear that they cannot be used intelligibly.

Remarks. In a dialogue, when it is vital to show how the two stand, the initial R. for Right, is put after one player's name, and the initial L. for Left, after the other's.

Speaking (aside) means that the player speaks so that only the audience hear the speech.

All things being equal, near the footlights is an excellent place from which to speak.

All stages ascend from front to rear, in order that the rear players may be seen.

MACHIAVELLI

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

LORENZO DE MEDICI, (*the Magnificent*) Grand Duke of Tuscany—the “remains” of, lying in state.

PIERO, his Son and Successor.

GIULIANO, brother to Piero, (*afterwards Duke of Florence*).

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI, Prime Minister to “The Ten”—(*a student of Diplomacy*).

CESARE BORGIA, Son to Pope Alexander VI, (*first a Cardinal, afterwards a General*).

His Bodyguard.

LEONARDO DA VINCI,

MICHAEL ANGELO,

RAPHAEL,

World renowned Artists.

ARIOSTO, a Poet.

OLIVEROTTO, a Roman.

A. CARDINAL.

GIUSEPPE, Lucia's lover, (*afterwards her husband*).

GIROLAMO SAVONAROLA, a Dominican Friar, (*a Martyr*).

BISHOP, (*in Savonarola's torture scene*).

AN OCTOGENARIAN.

GIOVANNI, and PAOLO, two guards.

II PRINCES of Italian States, also known as Tyrants
—or Condottieri (*Generals*).

PRIEST, (*in Machiavelli's torture scene*).

COURT BUFFOON.

A RECORDER.

GIULIA FARNESI, an Italian Beauty.

MARIETTA, wife to Machiavelli.

LUCIA, their Daughter, and Wife to Giuseppe.

MIGNON and CESARE, their Children.

CHARLOTTE, Wife to Cesare.

LOUISE, their Child.

DUCHESS, Wife to Giuliano.

CATERINA SFORZA, an Amazon.

DOCTOR,

PRIEST,

A SPECTRE,

(in the last scene)

Funeral Cortege: Male and Female Chorus: Lords and Ladies: Monks, Friars and Capuchins: Soldiers, Assassins, Attendants, etc.

CHRONOLOGY OF ACTION

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Machiavelli is 23—1492.

SCENE II.—Six months later—1492.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Five years later—1497.

SCENE II.—Five years later—1502.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—One day later—1502.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Ten years later—1512

SCENE II.—Some hours later—1512.

SCENE III.—Fifteen years later—1527.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Florence, Italy. The Palace of the Medici: an Ancestral Hall—the walls adorned with Bruised arms (hung up for monuments): and with Portraits. A large archway B. 2. E. covered with heavy porticos: a door R. 1. E. and a door L. 2. E.—The corpse of Lorenzo, (the Magnificent) lying in state, the coffin and bier covered with a pall.*

Discovered LEONARDO DA VINCI and OLIVEROTTO ORSINI. Enter MICHAEL ANGELO, RAPHAEL, and CESARE BORGIA, L. 2. E.

CESARE.

Leonardo da Vinci, you shall be arbiter,
Betwixt friend Michael Angelo and I;
He says that Niccolo Machiavelli,
Resembles the devil.

LEONARDO.

Cesare, my lad,
This startling likeness is so remarkable,
That many believe we have Satanus with us.

CESARE.

How do they know; no one ever saw him?

LEONARDO.

From a concept they have in their minds.
Machiavelli is handsome, glib, polished;
Can make horrid vices, seem like virtues,
By wondrous skill in the use of language.
People meet him and say, that he of men,
Is likest to the devil.

MICHAEL.

Our dispute,
Seems settled in my favor.

CESARE.

I care not:
He is just as dear to me!

RAPHAEL.

You love him;
And are ever with him as his shadow;
Or would not seek to portray him other,
Than so general an opinion.

CESARE.

I grant,
He is all that has been said of him:—
I never knew the devil was like THAT.

MICHAEL.

You ought to: you are studying for the
Priesthood.

LEONARDO.

Avoid,—here he comes.

(Enter MACIIAVELLI and GIULIA, B. 2. E.)

OLIVEROTTO.

You err:
Why THAT man has an angel with him!

MICHAEL.

That young girl has the face of an angel,
And the heart of a demon.

CESARE.

Giulia Farnese,
The lovely Giulia!—What brings her here?

RAPHAEL.

Curiosity: See, they pause by the remains:—
Now move towards the door that leads to the
Art-gallery. (Exeunt MACII. and GIULIA, L. 2. E.)

LEONARDO.

Sight-seers in plenty to-day:
The bronze doors of the palace are open,
And anyone may enter this ancestral hall,
And view the dust of the great De Medici,
Lorenzo the Magnificent; lying in' state,

OLIVEROTTO.

Florence is a republic only in name,—
That man was your King.

LEONARDO.

Now, the amenities:
Allow me to introduce you, Oliverotto—
This is Michael Angelo. (They bow)
You know that I am fat and aged forty;
And a world famous painter: but this youth;
Aged eighteen, already threatens my fame,
And will yet surpass me.

OLIVEROTTO.

You astound me!

LEONARDO.

He is a sculptor, too: and is carving,
For this royal family, a statue of the
Goddess of love; which he tastefully calls,
The Venus de Medici.
This is Raphael: also an art student:—
Only nine years old, but so precocious,
That he is nicknamed IL DIVINO, "the divine."

OLIVEROTTO.

You love to paint?

RAPHAEL.

O, yes Sir; indeed I do!

LEONARDO.

You have heard of Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia;
Who is regarded as a sure successor,
Of the present Pope?

OLIVEROTTO.

Could I live in Rome,
And be deaf to his fame?

LEONARDO.

This young fellow,
Aged sixteen, is Cesare Borgia, his son:
A student of Divinity.

OLIVEROTTO.

Perhaps he too
May be a Pope someday.

CESARE.

I was born to rule:
And shall speedily doff this priestly garb,
For the soldier's! Machiavelli says that
Men are evil: and cannot be controlled,
By kindness—but by force.

LEONARDO.

The tree inclines,
As the twig is bent: Machiavelli is no
Fit comrade for you: even though he is
Twenty-three years old.—Now Oliverotto,
You know them all: they are devoted chums,
And frequent the renowned Medicean Gardens;
Which the late Lorenzo, (*a patron of art*)
Threw open to them.

MICHAEL.

A perfect paradise!
That stirs into frenzy the sculptor's soul.
We are like to be barred from it now.

RAPHAEL.

You forget that Piero is one of us.

OLIVEROTTO.

And who is Piero?

MICHAEL.

The heir apparent:
The great Lorenzo's son, and successor:
A dashing and devil may care young man;
Aged twenty-one.

RAPHAEL.

Ah, he is coming.—

(Enter PIERO, B. 2. E.)

My beloved Piero; you have our sympathy!

PIERO.

I know it; and I need it: my father,
Lies dead there; and I am disconsolate!

CESARE.

O, cheer up: I have a quick cure for you.

PIERO.

What is it Cesare?

CESARE.

A bewildering creature;
Far lovlier than the loveliest statue;
And endued with passionate life!

LEONARDO.

Alas,

Now do the voluptuary and the churchman,
Walk hand in hand: and purity and virtue,
Are smothered in universal licentiousness.
The taint has affected even this youth:
Who commends passion as a panacea for grief.

MICHAEL.

I think I have a BETTER antidote:—
Come, let us take a walk in the Gardens,
Amongst the flowers: that bud bloom and die;
Teaching their sweet lesson of immortality.

CESARE.

Well, you may all go there: but as for me,
I will seek Niccolo and Giulia.(Exeunt all but CESARE. R. I. E., he is about to exit
L. 2. E., but is met by MACH. and GIULIA just
re-entering).

MACHIAVELLI.

Whither away, Cesare?

CESARE.

Only coming in

Search of you.

MACIIIABELLI.

I brought Giulia with me.

GIULIA.

That's a falsehood: I came in spite of
Your wishes.—We saw you with some friends.

CESARE.

What think you that they said just before
You entered?

GIULIA.

I am poor at riddles: what?

CESARE.

That dear Machiavelli here, was the very
Image of the devil.

MACHIAVELLI.

Ha! Ha!—

GIULIA.

Hear him:

Was not that a truly Satanic laugh?
He is handsome, eloquent and soulless,
As the devil: besides, I am very proud;
And he is poor: and none but a devil,
Could win MY love, with such a handicap.

MACHIAVELLI.

Your beauty, is more than human: but far
From angelic. I am sorry that I met you;
For I, the great Machiavelli; setting
All authority at naught, am yet your slave.
Your widow mother is poor; yet avaricious;
And will soon sell you to the most lustful
Of your noble suitors: and you yourself,
Will not be averse:—O God, I dread that day!

GIULIA.

And that day is near. But Niccolo, even
After I have prostituted my beauty,
For rank, riches and power; my heart will
Still be true; for you are devilish handsome!

CESARE.

You came to see the dead?

GIULIA.

No—the living:
Who is the heir?

CESARE.

Piero, the eldest son.

MACHIAVELLI.

Out jade! have you designs on him already?

CESARE.

He is only twenty-one, well formed,
And not bad looking: and is now by far,
The noblest and richest man in Florence.

MACHIAVELLI.

Curses on him!—

GIULIA.

Look at that demoniac face.

MACHIAVELLI.

I beg pardon: I meant, Hail to him!

GIULIA.

I pray that we may meet.

MACHIAVELLI.

If you do meet,
I may lose you; and if I do lose you,
I shall go mad. (To Cesare) Damnation!
Get her out of his way: take her into
The Gardens.

CESARE.

Come, Giulia, come with me:
We will visit the famous Medicean Gardens;
While Niccolo waits here.

GIULIA.

O, take me there!
And show me a statue of the haughty Venus:
Whom my admirers say is my only rival.

CESARE. (*aside*)

She will surely meet Piero, now: no matter—
Niccolo loves her, and I want to part them;
For he is my tutor in that which appertains
To evil. (*Exeunt CESARE and GIULIA, R. I. E.*)

MACHIAVELLI.

So, my supernatural personality, has so
Impressed them, that they all make of it
A subject for remark:—they shall yet find,
That I am a veritable imp of Satan.
Giulia—dazzling Giulia, I love her!
And yet I hate her, for she reminds me,
That I have a heart. She will desert me;
For hers is but a fiendish spirit,
Breathed into a form of alabaster;
And then my evil talents will indeed shine.
Am I not a pupil of Marcello Virgilio,
And employed in public affairs from youth?
Twenty three, now; I am wise beyond my age:
A bookworm, a philosopher, and oracle
Upon diplomacy: and while only Secretary,
To that august head of the Republic;
Mysteriously called "The Ten"—already
I am sent on many diplomatic missions;
And will yet reach the exalted position,
Which my proud soul covets.—Where's Giulia?

(*He peeps through, R. I. E.*)

Diabolo! here she comes, and leaning on
The fond arm of Piero. The sight does sere
Mine eyeballs! They must not see ME pale:
This armored figure, shuts me from them.

Re-enter Piero and Giulia, R. I. E.

PIERO.

O, charming day!

GIULIA.

Sad day, you meant to say,
For you are fatherless.

PIERO.

No, no, glad day:
It is the day I first met YOU.

GIULIA.

Shocking!

Have you forgot your father so soon?

PIERO.

Peace be to his ashes. He had to die;
And now I am noble and rich.

GIULIA.

Ah, you are

Ambitious and avaricious?

PIERO.

Yes, dear one;
But only for your sweet sake, Giulia!

GIULIA. (*crosses, R.*)

You must not talk that way.

PIERO. (*follows*)

Why not?

GIULIA.

Why not, Piero: because I am another's.

PIERO. (*crosses, L.*)

The devil!—

GIULIA.

Not the devil, but the devil's.

PIERO.

Hah, Machiavelli's!

GIULIA. (*crosses to him L.*)

That is, I WAS his:—
But now I am yours. (*She kisses him*)

MACHIAVELLI.

My God! she kisses him on the first time
Of meeting: this means in degenerate Florence,
That she is to be his mistress.

PIERO.

That caress, seals the contract which binds
You to our royal person. You are henceforth,
Court Favorite of Piero de Medici. (*Bell*)

GIULIA.

A bell tolls—

PIERO.

For the funeral obsequies:—
Giulia, I must hence; but you will remain;
For love, I would not part from you.

GIULIA.

Alas,
You will feel different when you see me
Every day: I will write to-morrow.

Re-enter Leonardo, Oliverotto, Michael,
Raphael, and Cesare, R. I. E., they go up, followed
by Piero, and all *exeunt*, B. 2. E. after Leonardo
says:

LEONARDO.

Come, let us join the solemn cortege:
The Priests, Monks and Capuchins, will soon
Be here.

MACHIAVELLI.

She demon! I greet you.

GIULIA.

What have I done?

MACHIAVELLI.

That snipe has bought your beauty, and soul,
For what! For trash—for money.

GIULIA.

You overheard?

MACHIAVELLI.

Curses on you, I am like to die! my heart
Is aching!

GIULIA.

Not I, but he it was, who made
The first overtures.

MACHIAVELLI.

This is the very way,
That these tyrants who rule by divine right,
Abuse us.

GIULIA.

Then blame Piero, and not Giulia:—
He tempts me, and I fall: and Niccolo,
You always say, that there is no pleasure
In sickly GOOD; but EVIL is most fascinating.

MACHIAVELLI.

To hell with Princes! From this present time,
And henceforth, I dedicate myself to
Their extermination. I am a perfect wizard,
In the use of language: I will write a book,
And call it "Principatibus" . . . (*To Princes*).
All men say that I resemble the devil:
Then let the devil help me to compose,
Such plausible yet hellish sentiments;
That Princes who peruse my book, will do
So many horrible and unnatural crimes;
That the Nations will be forced to spew
Them out!—

(*The expression of demoniac ferocity on Machiavelli's handsome face, is swiftly changed to assumed sanctimony as he sees a cross, in the hands of a bearer, who precedes the funeral cortege just entering, B. 2. E. composed of the family, friends, churchmen, and chorus of males and females. They form a group around the remains, and prostrate themselves the chorus sings, and other prostrations are occasionally made.*)

MALE CHORUS.

Dies Irae, Dies Illa!
Solvet saeclum in favilla,
Teste David cum Sybilla.

FEMALE CHORUS.

Day of wrath! O day of mourning!
See! Once more the Cross returning,
Heaven and earth in ashes burning!

MALE CHORUS.

Quantus tremor est futurus,
Quando judex est venturus,
Cuncta stricte discussurus.

FEMALE CHORUS.

Oh what fear man's bosom rendeth,
When from Heaven the Judge descendeth,
On whose sentence all dependeth!

CARDINAL.

Pallbearers,—please take up the corpse,
And bear it to the Chapel: where in high-mass
Obsequies, we will ostentatiously lament
The untimely fall of virtuous Lorenzo.

And from thence, take the precious dust to
The Church of the Santa Croce; to be
Interred there.

FEMALE CHORUS.

Confutatus maledictis,
Flammis acribus addictis,
Voca me cum benedictis!

MALE CHORUS.

When the wicked are confounded,
And by bitter flames surrounded,
Be my joyful pardon sounded.

FEMALE CHORUS.

Lacrymosa dies illa!
Qua resurget ex favilla,
Judicandus homo reus,
Huic ergo parce Deus!

MALE CHORUS.

Day of weeping, when from ashes
Man shall rise 'mid lightning-flashes,
Guilty, trembling with contrition,
Save him, Father, from perdition!

FULL CHORUS

Lord, who didst our souls redeem,
Grant a blessed requiem! Amen.

(*On this above resumption of the singing, the pall-bearers take their places at the bier, the others march around and form a procession behind them, then the pallbearers take up the remains, and all exeunt, B. 2. E. the singing ceasing out of sight.*)

MACHIAVELLI.

Ha, ha, ha!—Now that the CROSS has gone,
I am myself again.

GIULIA.

Niccolo, dear Niccolo!

MACHIAVELLI.

Away, shallow woman! (*Thrusts her aside*)
Thus do I forever cast off your amorous chains.
Now to my task: it is, "Damnation and Death,
To Princes!" I swear it! (*Exeunt B. 2. E.*)

Scene II.—*Florence. Machiavelli's study and laboratory: a large library extends half way around the room: and tables the other half on which are scientific instruments for occult and supernatural experiments such as necromancy, magic, astrology and chemistry: in rear on one side is a skeleton, and on the other side is a pedestal on which stands a bronze figure of Atlas, bearing the world on his shoulders—a large hollow glass globe: a table full of books at left side: only one door R. 2. E. The place has a lurid and ghastly aspect, which may be likened to the awful atmosphere inevitably created by dens of vice—so appalling to the*

innocent spectator, but not visible to the soul-deadened habitue. The room is dark, as the lights are low, and the moon is obscured by clouds.

MACHIAVELLI. (*writing*) ..

F—I—N—I—S—Finis! (*Throws down pen*)
My task is done, the book is finished:
“Principatibus”—(To Princes). This book,
Will make the fame of Machiavelli, notorious:
My name will be a synonym for treachery,
Cunning and duplicity. When published,
I will send it to these tyrant “Princes:”
And the devil grant that its sophistries,
May tempt them into the commission of
Heinous crimes—and destroy them all!—
But when, and where? that is the question:
I burn in desire to know the unknown.
By heaven! perchance the moon can tell me.
Orpheus says that the Universe has a soul;
And that the Moon is its eyes. No prophet,
Ere told the ancient Hebrews such secrets,
As the moon has whispered me.—
Strange to say, the last time I bespoke the
Shining sibyl, she was deaf to my prayer:
Envious of Giulia, no doubt. That was the
Evening of the fateful day false Piero,
Took Giulia from me. But that horror was
Six months ago, (*I have been absorbed since in Principatibus*)—I will make new trial.

(*Sets the Atlas-borne world near a window, raises the shade and harangues the moon*)

O, full and glorious moon, that often I,
Have seen serenely sailing in yon sky;
Shine on this globe, and shed a brighter beam,
WHERE Republic rises and overthrows its King.—
Alas, no light! Can Luna be jealous of
Giulia, still?—There is no cause. (*Dejected*)
Ha, what's that! the room grows lighter now;
Much lighter: and now she sends in a flood,
Of silvery splendor,—the globe is blazing,
With the borrowed beams!

(*The moonlight effect is produced by a searchlight; the globe's illumination is produced by a light inside of it, turned on with a wire connection.*)

Map of the earth, let me examine thee,—
To see what the sorceress hath revealed:
If any spots be brighter than the rest;
They must denote her prophetic revelation,
Of coming republics. (*He revolves the globe.*)
In this year of—our Lord (*sic*)—1492,
The utmost limits of the world, according
To our European geographers, are these:
To the West of us, the Azore Islands;
Eight hundred miles from Portugal's fair coast:
To the East of us, the East India Islands;
Just off the coast of China. This vast tract,
Between the Azores, and the East Indies,
Is marked here on the map as “a void”—
It may be all land, or water, or both;
It may be chaos, or chasm, or a hell!

Christopher Columbus, maintains that a
New Continent lies there; and is now sailing
The seas in search of it. Whate'er it is,
On IT the moon shines brightest: and if she
Be true seeress, that undiscovered country,
Is destined to be the birthplace of Republics!

(*Enter CESARE and OLIVEROTTO, R. 2. E.*)

CESARE.

What the thunder are you at? I thought you
Had given up SEANCING with the devil.

MACHIAVELLI.

Ha, ha, Cesare! you are quite jocular.
What, back from the Eternal City so soon?
And Oliverotto, too—

OLIVEROTTO.

Rome held us for
One month after the Pope's coronation:
We left there to-day, and just arrived
In Florence.

MACHIAVELLI.

I welcome your return: I was scarce myself,
While you were hence.

CESARE.

We missed you, so much!

MACHIAVELLI.

Cesare, what proud Lordling's garb, wear you?
With its red cassock—white rochet—short
Purple mantle—and red hat, peaked, broad
Brimmed, with a cord and tassel? Why lad,
This is a Cardinal's costume.

OLIVEROTTO.

And Cesare,
IS a Cardinal, now: having just been
Appointed Cardinal of Valencia; by the
New Pope, Alexander the Sixth.

MACHIAVELLI.

Egad,
Not yet seventeen, and a Cardinal.
This is a precocious age indeed, when
Generals, statesmen, diplomats and Priests,
Are often in their teens. But now tell me,
I pray you, about your Father's elevation
To the Pontificate, by the Sacred College?

CESARE.

Oh, all established usages were observed.
On the eleventh day after the death of
Pope Innocent the Eighth, the Cardinals,
Met in “conclave” in the Chapel of the
Vatican: on the next day, the twelfth day,
The election began: a two-thirds vote
Of the conclave is necessary to a choice;
And there are four modes in the choosing—
Scrutiny, Access, Compromise, Inspiration.

MACHIAVELLI.

High-sounding names: once familiar to me,
But my knowledge has grown rusty.

CESARE.

Two ballots

Daily are taken until a choice is made:
 Each Cardinal puts his ballot in a chalice,
 Placed upon the altar; the votes are then
 Counted, and if no election has resulted,
 Are burned up, so that the ascending smoke,
 May signal the failure to the expectant
 Outside crowds:—this is called “scrutiny.”

MACHIAVELLI.

As clear as sunlight.

CESARE.

If any candidate,
 Whose friends are not numerous enough,
 Gains other votes to give him the necessary
 Two-thirds, it is called “access.” If the
 Cardinals of two factions unite, it is
 Called “compromise.” If a spontaneous
 Movement bring about an election by
 Acclimation, it is called “inspiration.”

MACHIAVELLI.

How was your Father chosen?

CESARE.

By “compromise”—
 The CROSS, was then held forth a window,
 To acquaint the expectant crowds. The Pope,
 Changing his baptismal name, accepted
 The exalted place under the title of
 Alexander the Sixth. The coronation then
 Took place; after which he was invested
 With the “pallium” and the keys of the
 Lateran Church.

MACHIAVELLI.

And what the deuce are they?

OLIVEROTTO.

The pallium is an embroidered white sash,
 Worn on the shoulders: the Lateran Church,
 Is the cathedral church of Rome, and ranks
 Highest among Catholic churches.

CESARE.

Now you

Have heard it all.

MACHIAVELLI.

And I am much edified!—
 I congratulate you on your scarlet cloak:
 It will prove a rare disguise.

CESARE.

What mean you?

MACHIAVELLI.

The wolf in sheep’s clothing, enters the fold,
 And devours the innocent lambs, unmolested.
 No man does so much harm as a WICKED Priest.

OLIVEROTTO.

Yet few go wrong: for to commit sacrilege,
 Would endanger their immortal souls.

MACHIAVELLI.

Ha, ha! immortal souls! that is too funny.

OLIVEROTTO.

Do you not believe in a soul?

MACHIAVELLI.

Not I,—

It is all rot: Death is the end of all.—
 Life is short:—and as power, wealth, beauty
 And high-living are its only treasures,
 It behooves us to get them quickly,—and
 Foul means bring them quickest.

OLIVEROTTO.

But surely,

You believe in good and evil?

MACHIAVELLI.

I believe
 That we get what we work for. If we begin
 To generate sickly GOOD; the good SPIRITS,
 Flock around us thick as the growing wheat,
 And help to build an atmosphere of pale
 Colorless peace and purity: on the contrary,
 If we begin to generate intoxicating EVIL,
 The evil SPIRITS, flock around us thick
 As the growing weeds, and help to build
 An atmosphere of blazing sensuality.
 I am a student of necromancy, astrology,
 And magic—commonly known as the black arts,
 And you will notice that the atmosphere
 Of this room, is almost as lurid and ghastly,
 As the flames of hell.

OLIVEROTTO.

It seemed appalling,
 When I entered: but etiquette forbade
 Any utterance of emotion.

MACHIAVELLI.

I do some tricks:
 Some marvelous things; which I admit,
 Are produced by SLEIGHT OF HAND: and yet,
 Are not, I flatter myself, entirely destitute
 Of SUPERNATURAL agencies.

CESARE.

O, I saw some!
 And they were tricks past belief: Niccolo,
 Show us more.

MACHIAVELLI.

You see Oliverotto, how I
 Have whet his appetite.

OLIVEROTTO.

In this particular,
 As well as all others, he worships you.
 (Aside) To his lasting harm, and mortal hurt,
 I very much fear.

MACHIAVELLI.

I am a chemist, too,
 Of one mean skill; and have just concluded
 A study of the world’s most famous poisons.

Here is a rose, whose petals are impregnated,
With the deadliest of them all. One smell
Of it, would kill an ox,—and leave no trace,
Of how the poor thing died.

CESARE.

Supposing that
A person had an enemy: one, of whom he
Were well rid? Methinks in such a case,
This poison MIGHT prove handy.—

MACHIAVELLI.

By St. Peter!

What an apt pupil he is.

CESARE.

Now, astound him:
Show him the magic mirror's wondrous sights.

OLIVEROTTO.

O, perform, most potent magician, perform.

MACHIAVELLI.

You see that gilt framed pier-glass, there?
(He points to a large pier-glass at rear)
Or as Cesare calls it, the "Magic Mirror."
Differing from an ordinary looking-glass,
In that the quicksilver, is on the outside.
Too delicate and aesthetic to pay any
Attention whatsoever, to the human FORM:
It only reflects the ethereal and visionary
Images of the SUBCONSCIOUS mind.

OLIVEROTTO.

Jerusalem!

The sub-conscious mind: what is that?

MACHIAVELLI.

Listen: Every man possesses a dual nature:
The ordinary and inferior one that
He is CONSCIOUS of: and an extraordinary
And superior one that he is UNCONSCIOUS of,
Which is technically called sub-conscious.
Our unconscious nature controls our lives;
It receives the impulse from creative power;
And some time after its receipt, communicates
It to the conscious nature: which carries
It into execution.

OLIVEROTTO.

A marvel, that taxes
One's credulity: but I am half inclined
To believe it.

MACHIAVELLI.

That mirror will convince you:
For it will reflect the sub-conscious images,
Of deeds to be done, whether good or bad,
Crimes or heroisms, of any and all persons,
Who come within its radius: provided that
The white heat of this arc lamp, (Shows lamp)
Be turned upon the quicksilver, to develop
The shadow, and make it visible.

OLIVEROTTO.

Wonderful!

That these images of future deeds, are
In persons' minds, without their being
Conscious of it.

MACHIAVELLI.

Just so. Take your Prophet:
He is a man, who has improved, purified
And elevated his conscious nature, until
It grew more intimate with his sub-conscious
Nature, thus receiving its communications
Quicker than his grosser contemporaries,
And executing them before a startled world,
That receiving them later, at once invest
Him with the title of "prophet."

OLIVEROTTO.

They all
Have a common impulse; but the finest minds,
Apprehend it quickest.

MACHIAVELLI.

Exactly so, sir.

CESARE.

Oh, leave off talking: I am dying almost,
To see the pictures!

MACHIAVELLI.

Then, we will proceed:
You, Cesare, shall be the subject: let's see,
What the future has in store for you.
Stand here, so that you will be within
The radius of the mirror; and turn your
Face towards it: you, Oliverotto, stand
One side: now, I will turn on the lamp,
And flood the quicksilver, with light.

(Enter GIULIA, R. 2. E.)

GIULIA.

O, Niccolo!

MACHIAVELLI.

Giulia! by all that's holy.

GIULIA.

I am distraught to see you! What, Cesare—
Back from Rome!

CESARE.

Yes Giulia.

GIULIA.

You are dressed,
So splendid, that even my distress must
Take note of it. And this Gentleman, I
Saw in the Medicean Gardens the day of
The great Lorenzo's funeral.

CESARE.

Allow me,—
Oliverotto Orsini, a resident of Rome—
Giulia Farnese. (They bow)

GIULIA. (aside)

I like his face,
So much.

OLIVEROTTO. (aside)

O, that angel face is engraven
On my heart!

GIULIA.

Niccolo, give me instant speech with you,
I beseech you!—excuse us Gentlemen.

(They go Up)

OLIVEROTTO.

Fair Giulia, I love her!

CESARE.

Why I pray you?

OLIVEROTTO.

Because I can't help it: I loved her,
 At first sight; and have dogged her since,
 To get frequent sight of her angel face.
 Would that she were pure and good!

CESARE.

False Giulia, I hate her!

OLIVEROTTO.

Why, I pray you?

CESARE.

Because, despite his SANG-FROID Niccolo
 Loves her still. (*He goes L.*)

(Machiavelli and Giulia come Down)

MACHIAVELLI.

I cannot save your Piero.

GIULIA.

You can, you must!

You are scribe to Florence's August rulers,
 The mighty "Ten." The cruel decree of
 Banishment, that sends him hence to-day,
 Was inspired and writ by you. Your voice
 Can remove the ban, and restore his property;
 For it is not "The Ten" that really governs
 Florence, but the satanic Machiavelli.

MACHIAVELLI.

And all this I am to do, because Giulia
 Cannot part from her wanton lover?

GIULIA.

No, no!

It is not a case of love, but vanity:
 He is noble and rich; my soul covets
 Wealth and power. Diamond jeweld'd and
 Yellow satin'd I proudly strut o'er the
 Tiled floors of a palace, or ride round
 The Plaza in a royal coach: it has become
 My very life; to lose it is death!

MACHIAVELLI.

Zounds!

Think you not that many others have their
 Whims and fancies? Niccolo has them, too—
 You love diamonds and satins; I love SIN.
 The lusts for—and of—sensuous beauty,
 Are lighted by the fires of hell: it is
 Not strange that I fell, before your charms.
 You forsook me for Piero, and my whim,
 Took another form, "destruction of Princes!"

GIULIA.

Madman!—

MACHIAVELLI.

Do you see this manuscript?

(*He takes up Principatus MSS.*)

It is a most subtle treatise on "Diplomacy."

Every Prince will soon receive a printed
 Copy. Its teachings will confirm them in
 Their vices; and kind fate grant that the
 Maladministration of Princes, may cause
 Such a cataclysm of horrors, that they
 Will be destroyed by their rebellious
 Subjects!

GIULIA.

Save Piero!

MACHIAVELLI.

Girl, it may not be.

GIULIA.

Have mercy!

MACHIAVELLI.

You appeal in vain; I know none.

(*She weeps*)

Remain here a moment: I have a gift
 Of yours that I wish to return to you.

(Exit R. 2. E.)

(Cesare joins Giulia, with the poison rose)

CESARE.

Here, Giulia, smell of this; its fragrance
 MAY revive you. (*Aside*) The poisoned rose!

GIULIA.

I take it Cesare, but my aching heart,
 Makes no response to its loveliness.

CESARE.

It is unusually odorous, and will soothe
 You.

GIULIA.

Do you think so. (*She smells it*)
 What pungent odor it has. (*She trembles*)
 Oh, I am growing faint:—another smell,
 Perhaps may aid.

(Re-enter Machiavelli)

MACHIAVELLI.

Stop! for God's sake! (*He snatches rose*)GIULIA. (*Hysteric*)

Ha, ha—dire must the extremity be indeed,
 That makes THIS man call upon God!

MACHIAVELLI. (*Anxiety*)

How fare you, Giulia?

GIULIA.

A deadly lethargy,
 An awful numbness steals over me.

(*She falls into Oliverotto's arms*)

OLIVEROTTO.

My own! my darling one! that would have
 Been mine, had I the say!

GIULIA.

It might have been!

OLIVEROTTO.

Saints of mercy! she is dead.

MACIIAVELLI.

It is sad—

Farewell Giulia. Dead—and death ends all—
 It is well with her:—but I live—and
 Confound it, I am awfully discomposed,
 By this lugubrious sight!—Which leads one
 To reflect, that those who build up hells,
 And reign over them, must suffer equally
 With their subjects, the terrible penalties
 That inevitably spring from hellish conditions.

CESARE.

I loved Giulia once!

MACHIAVELLI.

Then why poison her?

CESARE.

Because she came between you and I—
 And you have always said that men were
 Justified in killing those that stood in
 Their way.—

OLIVEROTTO.

As the twig is bent, the tree inclines!

(Exeunt; the skeleton becomes animated)

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Refectory or Banquet Hall of the Dominican Convent of Santa-Maria-delle-Gracie, at Florence: also used as an Inquisition Hall for the trial of Heretics. Gothic style: with carved wood side walls: painted rear wall, surmounted by a carved wood architrave, with cross in center. An archway, R. 2. E. and a door, L. 2. E.*

Discovered Leonardo da Vinci, painting on the rear wall, a picture, (*afterwards world famous*) of "The last Supper." Raphael is looking on.

LEONARDO.

A few more strokes and the painting is done.

(He paints lightly here and there)

There; that will do: now to put my imprint,
 In the corner—by Leonardo da Vinci—so

(Paints name: stands back surveying picture)

"The Last Supper"—a sublime subject for
 The artist: no wonder my soul was in it!

RAPHAEL.

If your soul was in it, perhaps some of
 It remained there; and now you are minus,
 A full soul.

LEONARDO.

Ila, ha!—Raphael know you not,
 That the soul is infinite; and the more
 We give away, the more we still have left.

(Enter MICHAEL ANGELO. L. 2. E.)

MICHAEL.

How do you progress?

LEONARDO.

It is finished.

MICHAEL.

This creation is way above and beyond,
 All criticism: a picture so marvelous,
 That it must have been done with the brush
 Of inspiration!

LEONARDO.

Michael Angelo, you forget
 Your painting on the Palazzo Vecchio wall.

MICHAEL.

I remember that picture: and yours too,
 In the same palace, on another wall:
 But neither one, can compare with this.

LEONARDO.

The Scripture says: "When the EVEN was come,
 He sat down to eat with the twelve Apostles."

MICHAEL.

And "The last Supper" is now held sacred,
 Everywhere throughout the Christian world.

LEONARDO.

A most auspicious meal!

MICHAEL.

Let us run the
 Table round, and view each separate guest,
 With some minuteness:—This imposing figure,
 Is of course, the Lord: next to Him sit,
 Simon Peter, and his brother Andrew;
 On the right hand: while on the left are
 John, the beloved, and James, his brother:
 This is Bartholomew: this Thomas Didymus;
 Familiarly known as the "Doubting Thomas":
 Here is—(pauses).

LEONARDO.

Matthew, the publican:
 James, the son of Alpheus: Philip: Thaddeus:
 Simon, the Canaanite: and the cruel Judas,
 Surnamed Iscariot; who betrayed the Lord.

MICHAEL.

Grand! sublime! This oil painting on the
 Refectory wall, of this Dominican Convent,
 Of Santa Maria, will yet be one of the
 World's "wonders."

LEONARDO.

What is the meaning of
 Refectory?

MICHAEL.

A commodious banqueting hall:
This room, however, is also used as an
Inquisition Hall, for the trial of Heretics.

LEONARDO.

Some poor devil is to be tortured to-day.

MICHAEL.

By what process: the rack—or the flames?

LEONARDO.

The "Trial by Fire."

MICHAEL.

Ah, the poor fellow,
Will be cremated: unless he retracts,
His religious heresies. How learned you
Of it?

LEONARDO.

The Bishop, informed me that
Such a trial was to be held here soon;
And the painting, if not completed, would
Have to be suspended. Ah, he comes.

(Enter the BISHOP, L. 2. E.)

BISHOP.

The "Eucharist" that you have painted for us,
Here upon the wall, is of such divine beauty;
That the holy inmates of this convent,
Have set aside an hour to-morrow in pious
Celebration!

LEONARDO.

I thank you.

BISHOP.

You are done?

LEONARDO.

Yes, your Reverence.

BISHOP.

That is fortunate;
For we may soon expect the "Auto Da Fe."

(They come down)

RAPHAEL.

Oh, what is that!

BISHOP.

The young lad knows naught
Of such things. Auto da fe, interpreted,
Means "act of faith"—and is a street parade,
Conveying to the place of execution, the
Heretics condemned by the "Inquisition,"
To death.

RAPHAEL.

Why call it act of faith?

BISHOP.

Because,
It is deemed a duty by even the highest
In rank, to either march in the procession,
Or grace the occasion as spectators.

LEONARDO.

Where do they start?

BISHOP.

At the convent of
San Marco; and march from thence to the
Headsman: stopping awhile here, on the way,
For the torture of one of the condemned:
Whose fate depends upon whether or no,
He has the fortitude to suffer the pangs,
Of the "ordeal by fire"—without confessing.

MICHAEL.

Who is brave enough to take this horrible
Chance?

BISHOP.

A Dominican friar, by the name of
Girolamo Savonarola.

LEONARDO.

O, Savonarola, eh!
The inspired prophet and evangelist—
Who has stirred up Florence, yea even Rome,
Into a ferment:—the whole world has heard
Of Savonarola.

BISHOP.

The Saints protect the faith!

(Exit BISHOP, R. 2. E.)

RAPHAEL.

Will we be permitted to remain?

MICHAEL.

Permitted!

Why, the performers in the tragedy,
That is soon to be enacted, are just
As anxious to have an audience, as the
Melodrama players are.—Look there! Cesare,
As I live.

(Enter CESARE, L. 2. E.)

LEONARDO.

Cesare Borgia, what do you here?

CESARE.

Comrades,

How are you all? I am come to Saint Mary's
At the Pope's behest, to see that justice,
Is tempered with mercy, in Savonarola's case.

MICHAEL.

Where is your Cardinal's robe?

CESARE.

Cast aside—

I am a soldier now: Gonfaloniere of the
Papal army. Here comes a gorgeous squad,
Of my command, that I brought along as
An escort.

(Enter Soldiers, L. 2. E. who line up, L.)

LEONARDO.

A soldier, eh: you cannot become Pope, now.

CESARE.

But I hope to become ANOTHER, Caesar.

MICHAEL.

You have been long away from Florence?

CESARE.

Yes.

You remember the tragedy of the rose,
And the hubbub it created?

MICHAEL.

Very clearly:
How did you escape from the dilemma?

CESARE.

Why I contended that it was no offence,
To give one a rose: and the name of Borgia,
Did the rest. I left immediately afterward,
For Rome: and during the five years since,
I've been dweller in a realm of fables.

RAPHAEL.

O, tell us of them!

CESARE.

My income being large,
(*thanks to the Pope, my father*) I moved
Into a palace in the Trastevere: and with
Vassals and serfs at my call; played the
Priestly potentate. A few months thereafter,
With great pomp and ceremony, my sister
Lucretia, was united to Giovanni Sforza,
The Lord of Pesaro: one year rolled round,
And then, my youngest brother Giuffre, wed
Dona Sancia, the daughter of Naples' King:
And very recently; alas, only a year ago,
My elder brother, the Duke of Gandia, was—

MICHAEL.

Married?

CESARE.

No, murdered.

RAPHAEL.

What a terrible thing!
You were in despair?

CESARE.

Upon my soul, I was—
For many accused me of the crime.

RAPHAEL.

Heavens!—

But you were innocent?

CESARE.

The yes, or the no,
To that question, I will leave to puzzle
The future historian. But to continue:—
The devil himself seems in all Princes:
Those tyrant Condottieri; who, each in
His own way, sway kinglike over the various
Italian States; are warring with each other:
The foreign invaders; Ferdinand of Spain,
And Charles of France, are at our gates.

LEONARDO.

If report be true, bloody strife prevails
Between Prince and Prince, everywhere;
And between Prince and Subject, too.

CESARE.

And you can't guess the name of the man,
That caused it.

MICHAEL.

Who is it?

CESARE.

Machiavelli.

MICHAEL.

Niccolo Machiavelli! How COULD he do it?

CESARE.

He has writ and published a wondrous book,
Called *Principatibus*: which is being talked
About by everybody: this book is thought
To be the sole cause of these wars. Now,
When a Prince excels in diplomacy of craft,
His policy is characterized as Machiavellian.

LEONARDO.

I have read the book: it is addressed,
To Princes—and tells them how to control,
Their own subjects: and how best to acquire,
New territory. It is full of devil ethics:
Here are its maxims—

Not RIGHT, but MIGHT.

Not HONOR, but PERfidY.

Not PEACE, but the SWORD.

Not LIBERTY, but SLAVERY.

Not MERCY, but SEVERITY.

Not LOVE, but HATE.

These beliefs, (*not heavenly but hellish*),
Have been read and assimilated by Princes:
And future struggles for supremacy among
The Nations; are like to be blood-dyed,
On that account.

CESARE.

Say what you will, Niccolo,
Is a wizard at tongue-fence, and he writes,
As well as he talks. The book has so moved
My father, the Pope, that he has approved
My plan, to conquer with the Papal army,
Romagna, Umbria, and the Marches: those
Provinces that belong to the Holy See,
But are now ruled by various usurping
Princely Condottieri. Ere another fortnight,
I take a bride: but must skip the honeymoon,
And go forth to conquer, or be conquered.

MICHAEL.

You marry?

CESARE.

The fairest of Spanish maidens,
Charlotte d' Albret; sister of Jean d' Albret,
The King of Navarre. (a bell tolls)

LEONARDO.

Hark! the convent's solemn bell is tolling.

RAPHAEL.

The dreadful Auto Da Fe, is come!

CESARE.

Music—

Then let us move over beside my troop:
The procession will soon enter.

(They go to L. I.)

MICHAEL.

Here they come!

CESARE.

Headed by a brass-band: whose
Sonorous voice, has fallen into melancholy:
See, here comes a giant monk, bearing aloft,
The "Flag of the Inquisition:" next come,
The capuchins, monks, and friars: and next,
"The Penitents"—who have escaped punishment,
For paltry infractions of the true faith,
By penance: ah, there is the cross-bearer,
With the huge CROSS—preceding the condemned:
Here THEY come: bare-footed and bare-headed:
Poor devils, I pity them!—The Nuns, now:
Then the laity: and lastly, Savonarola.

LEONARDO.

What a noble looking man! Upon whose brow,
No sign of guilt nor fear. He could dare,
The deadliest form that death might take,
And dare it for the daring's sake.

MICHAEL.

Paraders

All, are lining up against the rear wall—
Except the CONDEMNED; whom the good Bishop,
Has just stationed in front of a crucifix.

CESARE.

And see, now he extinguishes their torches;
As a symbol that the light of their faith,
Has gone out.

RAPHAEL.

Why do they carry torches,
In the daytime?

CESARE.

The culprits must do so;
It is a custom. Hush, the Bishop begins
To speak.

BISHOP.

Where is his Honor, Machiavelli?
(Enter MACHIAVELLI, R. 2. E.)

MACHIAVELLI.

"At your elbows, Reverend sir!" quoth Satanus.

BISHOP.

Ah, your Excellency, is come in happy time.
A silent prayer, for Heaven's guidance,
And we will proceed with the "Trial by Fire,"
Of Girolamo Savonarola, for heresy.

(They pray inaudibly)

Now, let the apparatus be brought in.

RAPHAEL.

What will they bring, Cesare?

CESARE.

A contrivance,
That, without damage to the surroundings,
Allows an almost literal reproduction,
Of a "burning at the stake."

RAPHAEL.

Here they come,
Dragging an enormous circle of sheet iron;
An inch thick and six feet in diameter,
Which they lay flat on the floor.

CESARE.

The victim,
Is bound to the post, that is now placed
In the centre.

MICHAEL.

How is it secured?

CESARE.

By running,
Through a small hole in the center of circle,
Down into the floor.

LEONARDO.

Something rises pan-shape,
All around the outer edge: what is that?

CESARE.

A receptacle for the "burning fagots."

MICHAEL.

Here come two large coal-scuttles; one full,
And the other empty; and a pair of tongs.

CESARE.

The one contains combustible soaked fagots;
The other receives the embers: the tongs,
Are used for the feeding.—Be silent now,
The Bishop speaks.

BISHOP.

Now, let the culprit be bound to the stake.
Savonarola, have you anything to say?

SAVONAROLA.

Nothing—your Reverence.

MACHIAVELLI.

One moment, please.
Savonarola, come here: I would have some
Speech with you. (They come Down)
Well sir, despite your vaunted Christianity,
Your base humility, your love of right,
And your herculean efforts to promote good,
You have lost everything: while I myself,
An infidel, who despise humility, love wrong,
And take delight in promoting evil,
Have gained much!

SAVONAROLA.

"What profiteth it a man,
If he gain the whole world, and lose his
Own soul."

MACHIAVELLI.

Hah—*(He is agitated, but recovers finally)*
Soul—you fool! What is a soul?

SAVONAROLA.

The immortal,

And everlasting part of us; that becomes
Fixed in an eternal and unchangeable state,
At death. But during life—is capable,
By trust in God, of infinite expansion:
Or is capable, by distrust of God,
Of infinite degradation.

MACHIAVELLI.

Go, Girolamo,

Tell that to children, lunatics and fools:
I take no stock in it. I am an Epicurean:
My motto is, “Eat, drink and be merry,
For to-morrow I die.”

SAVONAROLA.

But when you die,

You will need a helper.

MACHIAVELLI.

Who can help me?

Who can help you?

SAVONAROLA.

The Lord, is my helper.

MACHIAVELLI.

Nonsense!—
Savonarola, you are a religious ascetic,
Who exulted over the exalted conditions,
Of theology, literature and the fine arts;
But deplored the everywhere prevalent
Corruption, skepticism and licentiousness.
In your efforts at reformation, you incurred
The bitter enmity of both Church and State;
And was tried for heresy—the Inquisition,
Sitting at Saint Mark’s convent. Found guilty,
Of the charge, you were sentenced to die.
In view of some distinguished services,
That you have rendered to the Florentines,
It has been suggested by the mighty “Ten,”
That mercy be extended you. The Inquisition,
Complying, have granted you a trial by fire;
Here in Saint Mary’s convent. Remember this—
If you stand the ordeal, without confessing,
You are a free man: but if you confess,
You will join the ranks of the men, there,
Who are to be turned over to the State,
For immediate execution.—
I represent “The Ten.”—I have finished.

SAVONAROLA.

I know the conditions: Let the test begin.

(They go Up)

BISHOP.

Attendants—do your duty.—
Savonarola, this is your Gethsemane.

SAVONAROLA.

May the good lord grant me deliverance,
As were those cast into the fiery furnace:
Yet, not my will, but His, be done.

MICHAEL

See, now the victim is led to the stake,
And bound to it. With the pair of tongs,
The fagots are placed in the receptacle,
And are then ignited—Merciful heavens!
How the flames shoot up around him!

RAPHAEL.

O, how I pity him! Higher, higher, higher,
Rise those cruel tongues of flame: and speak,
Of nothing but despair!

LEONARDO.

He groans in agony! and madly seeks,
To burst his bonds! Hark, he speaks!

SAVONAROLA.

O God have mercy!—Bishop, release me!

MACHIAVELLI.

Do you confess?

(Savonarola nods)

BISHOP.

Attendants—quench the fire.

(With tongs they remove the burning fagots)
Girolamo, ere we free you from the stake,
Do you in the presence of these witnesses,
Confess your guilt of heresy, as charged?

SAVONAROLA.

I—no, no,—I am innocent of wrong!

MACHIAVELLI.

The cunning rascal has deceived us—
It was only a pretext to gain respite:
The place was getting a little too WARM.

BISHOP.

O, that we could strain a point for him,
That justice was sated—that he has stood
The test!—What shall we do?

MACHIAVELLI.

Our duty, Sir,
Is to rebuild the fire: it is an easy task—
And yet the rogue’s to blame, for ‘tis a shame,
To waste so many fagots.—Come you knaves,
Set about it.

RAPHAEL.

Look! they fill the pans with fresh fuel:
And now they re-light it. The wretched man,
Seems dazed by agonized perplexity;
He don’t know what is best for him to do:
He is indeed confronted by a frightful
Dilemma!

CESARE.

To grasp either horn of the dilemma,
Is alike deadly: if he don’t confess,
He will be burnt up alive: if he does confess,
He must die by the headsman.—The vagabonds,
Are remiss in their work: I will take charge—
The heat must be intensified.

RAPHAEL.

Have mercy!

As you expect mercy!

CESARE.

Let go of my cloak.

(Goes Up) You miscreants, throw on fagots!

CAPUCHIN.

By what authority does this man speak?

BISHOP.

He is a deputed agent of his Holiness,
Pope, Alexander the sixth

CAPUCHIN.

Then I am sure,
That he cruelly transcends his authority;
For the Pope is humane and merciful.

CESARE.

Mind thy own affairs: thou meddling Priest:
Throw on more fuel I say—upon my soul,
I'll make a corpse of him that disobeys me!

MACHIAVELLI.

And he will make good his threat.

CESARE.

Niccolo—
I saw you enter; longed to swap greetings;
And now the chance has come.

MACHIAVELLI.

Cesare Borgia—
It is a treat to see you here in Florence.

CESARE.

Have I done well to increase the torture?

MACHIAVELLI.

Admirably! you are an angel of mercy—for
The villains thinking it wise to obey you,
Have so greatly augmented the fire's heat,
That the literal hell, will force him to
Confess sooner. Hark to his cries and moans.

CESARE.

If he remain obdurate very much longer,
He will become a veritable human lobster.

MACHIAVELLI.

Ha, ha, ha!—that is funny. Mirth may be
Out of place here: but lugubrious sights,
Cannot make wit—a whit less witty.

SAVONAROLA.

Mercy! mercy! I confess!

BISHOP.

You do confess
Yourself guilty of heresy?

SAVONAROLA.

May the Lord,
Pardon me—Yes! Yes!

BISHOP.

Attendants—release him.
(They do so and he staggers out and swoons)

CAPUCHIN.

It is but a fit of nervous prostration:
He will soon recover.

BISHOP.

Minister unto him.

“The seal of the breast” must yet be stamped,
On the other condemned: by that time
He may be so far himself, that the seal
Can be given him.

RAPHAEL.

(To Cesare, who has returned to L. I.)
What is the Bishop doing now?

CESARE.

Hitting,

Each of the condemned, a gentle blow
On the breast: this being a sign and symbol,
That the spiritual power, gives them over
To the temporal power—for quick execution.

LEONARDO.

Ah, thank heaven, Savonarola revives!
And see—he gets on his feet.

CESARE.

Poor fellow—

He cheats the flames, to glut the headsman:
For the Bishop hits him the “breast blow,”
And takes him over to the other culprits.

MICHAEL.

It is very sad!

LEONARDO.

Now they are assuming,
Processional formation again: and now,
To the strains of the music, they move.

CESARE.

Come, let us be going.

(Exeunt Cesare, Leonardo, Michael, and Raphael
L. 2. E. followed by Cesare's Soldiers)

MACHIAVELLI.

(Comes Down; looks back at retiring parade)
Ha, ha, ha!—I like these saintly Churchmen,
No better than the devil likes the holy water.
They are always fighting among themselves,
About Christ's teachings; which they yet claim
Are not easily misunderstood. Let them fight,
And kill each other, too. Every one gone,
Is a distinct gain for evil: quarrel they
Ever so much, they are in a fair way
To yet reform the world. (Exeunt parade R. 2. E.)
“When you die, you will need a helper:”
Those are his words. (He becomes grave)
CAN there be anything after death? and so,
My wickedness is fraught with danger!
Pshaw—I'll not think of it: I am growing
Positively childish: ha, ha, ha! (Exit)SCENE II.—Machiavelli's study and laboratory
again, (see Act 1 Scene 2) with its library and
tables of occult instruments in the rear: its
skeleton R. 3; its atlas L. 3; its table of books
with a skull added L. 2. an added small stand
C. 3., an added sofa R. 1: only one door R. 2. E.

(Enter MARIETTA, R. 2. E.)

MARIETTA.

O, this laboratory, gives me the horrors!
Yet I love to be with my dear husband—
And he spends nearly all his time here,
When he is home. (looks in glass) A fright!
If Niccolo only knew, that his uncanny
Practices, and not a disease of the heart
Had driven the roses from my cheeks, and
The symmetry from my form, and had left me
A colorless attenuated invalid, he would—
Know the truth, but the truth would not
Change him; for he is set in his ways,
And he no longer loves me! (Sobs)

(Enter MACIIAVELLI, R. 2. E.)

MACHIAVELLI.

Well Marietta, what are you blubbering over?

MARIETTA.

I want you to love me more, Niccolo!

MACHIAVELLI.

Nonsense! Marietta: am I not a quintessence,
Of the courtly and gallant cavalier?

MARIETTA.

Yes, you are handsome as Apollo, and in
Every way perfection—except the lack,
Of one thing.

MACHIAVELLI.

What is that?

MARIETTA.

You have no soul.

MACHIAVELLI.

I frankly admit the allegation—I need none:
I live by the senses.

MARIETTA.

And the senses teach,
Only an indulgence in the baser passions.
What did you marry me for?

MACHIAVELLI.

Jesu! my dear:
You were the loveliest woman in Florence,
Yea, Italy.

MARIETTA.

I WAS: but alas, ill health,
Has robbed me of that beauty; and now,
Your love has died!

MACHIAVELLI.

How could my love live?
Your beauty gone; what had it to feed on?

MARIETTA.

My better parts— my soul.

MACHIAVELLI.

Pshaw!—

MARIETTA.

Niccolo,

Beware of pessimism.

MACHIAVELLI.

You have changed,
Your tune greatly: your beauty was your God:
And you displayed it on all occasions—
Enhanced by artifice. You lured swains,
Into passionate declarations of devotion,
With your decollete neck and jewel'd hair,
And then transfixed them with a vacant stare.

MARIETTA.

God help me! I did: and the loss of beauty,
Has saved my soul. But it seems as though
No visitation of the Almighty, would ever
Alter you.

MACHIAVELLI.

It never would.

MARIETTA.

Beware man!

The Kingdom of Heaven is born within you:
And full grown—is more beautiful than aught,
That eye hath ever seen, or tongue hath told!
Do not dwarf and stunt it, by your perversity.

MACHIAVELLI.

Come, leave me at once.

MARIETTA.

Only four years wed,
And you cannot endure my company: you
Are anxious to be rid of me.

MACHIAVELLI.

Nonsense!

To-morrow I must away for a season.
General Cesare Borgia, is at Sinigaglia,
Fighting the battles of the Holy See:
He is bayed about with many traitors,
In the shape of a league of Condottieri;
And has sent for me to come to him.
I must prepare for the journey: besides,
A visitor is expected.

(Enter LUCIA, R. 2. E. She runs to MARIETTA)

LUCIA.

O, Mamma dear! you are here.

MARIETTA.

Yes, my Lucia.

LUCIA.

I never like to come here, because I'm
Afraid to: that awful skull affrights me—

MARIETTA.

Does it, sweet!

LUCIA.

And that poor old man there,
Carrying the whole world on his shoulders:
O, he looks so tired!

MARIETTA.

That man is Atlas,
It is not real, my dear: but only a myth,
A fairy story.

LUCIA.

Mercy on me, how that thing,
Makes me tremble! It looks just like a man,
But is nothing but a mass of horrid bones.

MACHIAVELLI.

That is a skeleton, my child. We all
Become exactly like that, when we lose
The ambrosial flesh.

LUCIA.

O, how do we lose it!

MACHIAVELLI.

When we die.

LUCIA.

Why, O why, do people die?

MARIETTA.

Because they cannot help it.

LUCIA.

An aged man,
So bent, and nearly as thin as the—the—

MARIETTA.

Skeleton.

LUCIA.

Called at the house yesterday:
Papa, what did he come for?

MACHIAVELLI.

For life, life!
He wants to live longer: to renew his youth;
To grow beautiful again.

LUCIA.

How delicious!
And can you make him?

MACHIAVELLI.

Yes, I can prolong
His life, awhile—perhaps forever.

MARIETTA.

Leave
The room, Lucia Alas, Niccolo, that you,
Should put into her receptive young mind,
Such evil thoughts, *(Exit Lucia)*
This aged man: I know not what sorcery.
You meditate with him: but I charge you—
Be careful!

MACHIAVELLI.

Who is there that I fear?

MARIETTA.

A higher Power—you will soon feel, if
You do not soon repent: if you persist,
In your evil courses, some dreadful blow,
Will fall upon you: and if you do not
Heed that, it will be followed by a
Worse one! *(Exit Marietta)*

MACHIAVELLI.

Ha, ha, ha! these women, are so emotional:
I take no stock in her gloomy forebodings.
But Girolamo Savonarola, the prophet—
It is almost five years since he died,
And yet his words ring in my ears still:
“When you die, you will need a helper!”

(Machiavelli goes to table L. 2. takes skull in his hand and apostrophizes it)

MACHIAVELLI.

Behold this ruin;—horrid skull!
Once of the ethereal spirit full.
This narrow cell was Life's retreat,
This space was Thought's mysterious seat:
What beauteous visions filled this spot;
What dreams of pleasure long forgot!
Nor hope, nor joy, nor love, nor fear,
Have left one trace or record here.—

(He meditates a little while)

This hideous object, suggests a query:
What is life? —What says the “Microcosm.”

(He lays down skull, and takes up a book)

This book concedes that it is impossible,
To give a perfect definition of life.
Among several opinions which follow,
Let us take the renowned Paracelsus':
“Life is the twofold internal movement,
Of composition and decomposition,
At once general and continuous.”
Twofold—mark that twofold. Forces which
UNITED, are powerful, but which DIVIDED,
Are powerless. Man says that they must part
At three score years and ten: and so fixed
Is he in this error as to invite decay—
Death is the result of his own fancies.

(He rises, and comes Down)

To prolong life, indefinitely; yea, perhaps
FOREVER: this breach between the two forces,
(defined, falsely defined—spirit and matter),
Must be prevented at all hazards. To do this,
Man's hereditary illusions must be killed.
But this is the work of years: right now,
The vital question is—what can Niccolo do,
To stave off the tyrant death?
The answer is easy. First—I must re-unite,
These two forces, which, through tradition,
Have already drifted apart: this re-union,
Can be easily brought about by magnetism.
Second—when these forces are re-united,
They must be bound so indissolubly together,
That future separation will be impossible:
This must be done with my elixir compound,
Of mercury, sulphur and brimstone.
The elixir compound seems to be perfect:
But I am not fool enough, to test it,
On myself. The old man whom Marietta
Berated me about, is to be the subject,
Of my first experiment: I hope that
He will come. Now that the supreme moment,

Of success or failure is at hand, even
My strong nerves tremble: high-strung nerves,
Yet, incapable of FEAR.

(Enter an OCTOGENARIAN, R. 2. E.)

OLD MAN.

Ah, you are here.

MACHIAVELLI.

I am waiting for you.

OLD MAN.

Are you ready for the operation?

MACHIAVELLI.

Yes—

Here take this easy chair.

(Gets a chair, puts it at C. 2. Old Man sits)

OLD MAN.

Pity the sorrows of a poor old man;
These palsied limbs just lasted to your door;
My days are dwindling to the shortest span;
O, give relief! and God will bless you, Sir!

MACHIAVELLI.

Have patience, friend: one foot of yours,
Is in the grave, already: the other one,
Will soon be there—without my nostrums.
With them—we hope to have you young again:
And whispering flattery in ladies' ears.

OLD MAN.

And all this you are kind enough to do,
For me.

MACHIAVELLI.

For you, imbecile: no—for me!
Through you, I seek the means to save myself.
Ghastly cadaverous and senile old man;
No endless round of fleshly lustful pleasure,
Can compensate for the final reduction,
Into such a state as thou art in. Better
Die by one's own hand; than to live,
To become like thee!

OLD MAN.

The burden of the aged,
Would be too heavy for them, were it not
For their trust in the Lord.

MACHIAVELLI.

Absurd, sir!

(He goes Up, and soon comes back with a Helmet
and Mirror, and stand on which they laid)
Look at this beautiful helmet.

OLD MAN.

A soldier's headgear: what is it for?

MACHIAVELLI.

'Tis

The magic talisman, by which I hope
To effect your cure.

OLD MAN.

What remedial power,

Doth it possess?

MACHIAVELLI.

It is full of magnetism.
The wonderful magnet, attracts other metals;
The same as one person attracts another.
We often hear some lady spoken of
As being "very attractive:" and this is
A quality that the magnet also possesses.
Psychologists find that man and the metals,
Are composed of the selfsame properties:
And therefore, a magnet will not only
Attract metals, but it will also attract
The forces that go to make up human life.

OLD MAN.

Marvelous!

MACHIAVELLI.

These forces are twofold: and
Their being reft asunder, by slow stages,
Results in old age, and eventually death.
The spirit leaves the body and the man dies;
The body keeps the spirit and the man lives.

OLD MAN.

These forces that get along so well together,
For so many years, only to drift apart,
In the end—you think may be reconciled,
By magnetic influence?

MACHIAVELLI.

Exactly, sir.

OLD MAN.

The idea is inspiring! 'Tis man's nature,
To forget former animosities, in the
Common pursuit of some new attraction.

MACHIAVELLI.

This helmet, alive with the most potent
Of magnets, I now place upon your head;
And await your transformation.

(Places the helmet: falls back to watch).

OLD MAN.

What do you observe?

MACHIAVELLI.

What do I observe:
By heaven! man—you are growing younger!

OLD MAN.

O, do not mock me, sir.

MACHIAVELLI.

'Tis true, I swear.
You are become, an animated mummy: that
Ghastly flesh is taking on the health tints.

OLD MAN.

I must confess, I feel much better!

MACHIAVELLI.

Look!

See for yourself!

(Mach. holds up mirror, and when he takes it away, the old man has become younger, the change being secretly made behind it.)

OLD MAN.

The good Lord be praised!

Te-hee, te-hee: you see I laugh with joy.
I thank you sir! I thank you sir!

MACHIAVELLI.

Now,

Get up and walk.

OLD MAN.

That will be quite easy.

(Old Man goes Up, and comes back).

MACHIAVELLI.

Huzzah! your locomotion is perfect.

OLD MAN.

It would be easy for me to peregrinate,
For miles.

MACHIAVELLI.

The helmet has done its work:
Your forces are once more in harmony:
The result is marvelous; and only begun.
Now, take this dose of medicine.

OLD MAN.

What for?

MACHIAVELLI.

What has been united, must not be divided:
There must be no future separation—
This elixir will prevent that.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Room of State in Cesare Borgia's Palace at Sinigaglia. The rear wall is hardwood wainscot, made in 7 panels, each about 7 feet high and 2 1-2 feet wide; there are 7 base-relief figures of mailed knights, one on each panel, supposed to represent several tyrant Condottieri, of the Italian States: the side walls are in the same wainscot, without panels: an archway at L. 2. E. covered by two portieres, which meet in the centre: a door at R. 1. E. and a door at R. 3. E.: a double throne at R. 2. near wall.*
(Enter GIOVANNI and PAOLO, R. I. E.)

GIOVANNI.

My good Paolo.

PAOLO.

What says my Giovanni?

OLD MAN.

Will it?

Then let me drink. (He drinks elixir)

MACHIAVELLI.

Hath it not a pleasant taste?

OLD MAN.

'Tis bitter,

And makes me very sick.

MACHIAVELLI. (anxiously)

What's the matter!

OLD MAN.

I faint! I die!

(Ere MACHIAVELLI can catch him he swoons to the floor, and dies).

MACHIAVELLI.

Here's a shocking catastrophe, indeed!
In scorn I sought to overturn nature's laws,
And death appears majestic, to defy me.
To remain here longer, is to tempt fate:
And yet the medicine will tell no tale.
First to put away glass, helmet, mirror:
Then remove him to yonder sofa. (He does)
Now to visit Cesare Borgia, at Sinigaglia.
By the way—this fatality, must be the
First blow, that Marietta said would be
Visited upon me: I wonder what will be,
The second blow! (Exit)

(Re-enter MARIETTA, R. 2. E.)

MARIETTA.

Where is the old man? I didn't see him leave:
But Niccolo just left—oh, there he is,
Over on the sofa. My God! he is dead!
What will become of Niccolo? Poor Marietta.

(She swoons: curtain)

GIOVANNI.

How fares the tigress in the castle fosse?

PAOLO.

You mean Caterina Sforza, the amazon—

GIOVANNI.

And she devil, yes: the warlike mistress,
Of Imola and Forli, (her Lord being dead).
Cesare Borgia had the fiercest of fighting,
In those States: her indomitable courage,
Made their conquest no easy task.

PAOLO.

Ratlike,

She was driven in a corner, and caught
At last in her castle's Keep

GIOVANNI.

Foolish man!

To lock her in ditchy dungeon, below,
Here in the Palace of Octavian Riario.

PAOLO.

Egad, he had no other alternative.
Having subdued the proud Lordling, Riario;
In his native stronghold of Sinigaglia;
He took his Palace for a military seat:
And used its subterranean passages below,
For prison cells—so here she came.

GIOVANNI.

Caterina and Octavian are sworn friends:
Both are quick to kill where they most hate.
There are secret panels within the walls,
Where lurk assassins: and many an enemy,
Of Octavian's, that was seen to enter here,
Was never heard of after Cesare's place,
I would not take for a thousand florins!

PAOLO.

Whether he like it or no, he must stay:
His army is here; the castle is besieged,
And it is difficult for an individual,
To get either in or out.

GIOVANNI.

When loose you the tigress from her chains?

PAOLO.

I go now to take her for an airing:
Wait and watch; in a trice she is here.

GIOVANNI.

What in this Room of State?

PAOLO.

'Tis her whim,
To stand here awhile upon her daily rounds,
Gazing fixedly at yonder mailed knights;
Imaged in bas relief upon those panels.
It seems tomfoolery to me; but her tips,
Which run into ducats, make me condescending.

GIOVANNI.

I shall be on the lookout for her.

(*Exeunt GIOVANNI and PAOLO, R. 3. E.*)

(*Enter CESARE, R. 3. E.*)

CESARE.

Ghostly shadows, last night, cast more terror,
To this stout heart; than all the enemies,
That hem me round! In this trade of war,
I have done many cruel and bloody things:
But the murder of sister Lucretia's mate,
Alfonso, Duke of Biseggia; so surfeits me
With remorse, that I need but small suasion,
To forsake my evil ways.

(*Enter MACHIAVELLI, L. 2. E.*)

MACHIAVELLI.

'Tis time you did.

CESARE.

Ah, Niccolo, you are here!

MACHIAVELLI.

Safe and sound.

CESARE.

What makes you look so solemn, man?

MACHIAVELLI.

Mourning,

For an old man friend of mine, who died
Quite suddenly yesterday. I left Florence,
Shortly afterwards, and just arrived here.
After some narrow, hair raising escapes,
From pursuing soldiers, your wily escort,
Succeeded in landing me within these walls.

CESARE.

You know I am besieged.

MACHIAVELLI.

Beseiged! By whom?

CESARE.

By traitors: and their forces hold me tight.
You see, I had conquered for the Pope,
Those various Italian States; that together,
Make up that vast tract contiguous to Rome,
Known as Romagna, Umbria, and the Marches.

MACHIAVELLI.

I heard the news in Florence.

CESARE.

Well, this done,
I fixed my headquarters in this castle.
The several Rulers, whom I had deposed,
Soon formed a conspiracy against me;
And marching on to Sinigaglia, here,
Have turned this palace into my prison.

MACHIAVELLI.

How can I help you?

CESARE.

They swear by you!

They have read your *Principatibus*: and are
Madly eager to meet the man that wrote it:
Demi-god, or Demi-devil, they call him.
Like all Princes, they love war, wealth, power:
They love to rob other Nations of Territory:
They love to oppress their subjects: therefore,
Bow down and worship, any crafty logician;
Who by sophistry, can blind men's reason,
And prove to them that such things are right.
I sent word to them you were to be here,
And invited them to come and meet you:—
Also to consider the terms of a treaty.

MACHIAVELLI.

In that treaty's making, what role have I?

CESARE.

Machiavellian diplomacy is your offspring:
Consisting of treachery, selfishness, craft:
Yet to deluge this earth of ours, I fear,
With blood and tears and waste and want!
The cunning brain that fashioned it, can,
If it try, drive for me—a hard bargain.

MACHIAVELLI.

You flatter me: but I will do my best.

Enter Charlotte and Louise, with an Attendant
through the portieres, L. 2. E. the Attendant then
retires.

CHARLOTTE.

My dear husband!

CESARE.

What my Charlotte, you!

(They embrace) And who is this tiny tot?

CHARLOTTE.

Baby Louise! your Louise, my Louise.

CESARE.

(He takes her) What a sweet little darling!
Louise, do you know me?

LOUISE.

No sir.

CESARE.

Darling!

I am your own Papa.

LOUISE.

O dear, dear Papa!
Mama told me that you were beautiful—
But you are far more beautiful than that!

CESARE.

My, how she has grown.

CHARLOTTE.

Four years old, now:
She was less than one, when you left Rome.

CESARE.

But Charlotte dear, what moonstruck madness,
Made you risk the dangers of a trip here?

CHARLOTTE.

I heard that you were in great extremity.
And determined to come to you. The place,
Was soldier guarded, but being a woman,
They let me pass.

CESARE.

I love this child Louise!
She has taken firm hold on my heart strings.
O, that I were a better man: her father,
Should indeed be a paragon of virtue.

CHARLOTTE.

That you are not, Cesare, I grieve to think:
Forgive me when I say that you are wicked;
And many a tear this knowledge cost me.
Force not fame's passage with bloody sword;
But rather ape the soft arts of peace:
Then in tranquillity we'll live together:—
O, promise this! upon my knees I plead!

CESARE.

Rise, rise Charlotte, your prayer is granted:
Henceforth, I'll lead a nobler, truer life.

CHARLOTTE.

You have made me very happy!

CESARE.

Your pardon, Niccolo! This gush of welcome,
To my wife and child, had to run its course.
Let's make amends now, by an introduction:
Charlotte, this is Mr. Machiavelli, my friend.

CHARLOTTE.

Delighted to meet you! (They bow)

MACHIAVELLI.

Your ladyship's

Most obedient servant!

CHARLOTTE.

This is Louise—
Our child. (Louise takes his hand)

MACHIAVELLI.

As fair,

As one of the fabled angels!

LOUISE.

Oh, Mamma, see those beautiful soldiers,
Back there on the wall! Seven of them!

(Louise goes Up followed by Charlotte, and ad-
mires the bas-relief knights on panels).

MACHIAVELLI.

By heaven! your wife is almost as lovely,
As the dazzling Giulia. I am married now,
And must forget lost loves; but Giulia's fate,
Has left a rankling sadness at my heart:—
Damn that Prince who lured her off!

CESARE.

'Twas death,

That took her.

MACHIAVELLI.

But Piero took her first.
These Princes are pests: and their subjects,
Are well rid of them,—when they abdicate,
Are overthrown, die a natural death,
Or are struck down by the assassin's hand!

(Last line in a hoarse whisper).

CESARE.

What do you mean?

MACHIAVELLI.

These Princeely Condottieri,
Who are to be here soon, are false traitors:
They deserted you and went to the enemy,
And now menace your life. 'Tis folly,
To turn the serpent loose to bite again,
Once you have it in your power.

CESARE.

You want me to shed their blood!

MACHIAVELLI.

Did I say blood?

Nonsense—

CESARE.

What then?

MACHIAVELLI.

Poison them.

CESARE.

Hah! that's not a bad idea. Thank fortune,
The temptation is only momentary, for,
I have no poison.

MACHIAVELLI.

Your letter to me,

Was a call for help: I know of no helper,
Like the mixture contained in this bottle:
One grain of it in a glass of wine kills;
And leaves no traces for the post mortem.

CESARE. (aside)

What shall I do? Ambition beckons on:
But my dear Charlotte—my promise to her,
Should be kept; yet Niccolo's plan is grand:
By Jove! I will adopt it.

MACHIAVELLI.

Your decision?

CESARE.

Will you dispense it?

MACHIAVELLI.

Will I dispense it:
Not at all; nor would I have you do so.
The devil prompts men to crime: he commits
None himself. Therefore, if religion be true,
And at the judgement day, we must appear,
Before the Almighty's bar, he will wear
Clear skirts.

CESARE.

Give me the stuff: I'll do it.

(He takes vial: Charlotte and Louise come Down).

CHARLOTTE.

Wherefore do you ring?

CESARE.

For an attendant.

(Attendant appears R. I. E.)

She will conduct you to the ladies quarters;
Where we will join you anon. Prepare you,
For I am expecting guests here soon: stay,
Louise must not return.

(*Exeunt Attendant, Char. and Louise, R. 3. E.*)

The sight of her face would unnerve me.
Come, Niccolo—(*Exeunt Cesare and Mach, R. 3. E.*)
(Enter CATERINA in the custody of PAOLO, L. 2. E.)

CATERINA.

Please leave me here a little while alone:
This place reminds me of my former state;
When I was sovereign of Imola and Forli.
Restraint is irksome to the proud Caterina:
Go away—and presently you may return.

PAOLO.

Your whitened hair and majestic mien,
Together with a tall and stalwart form
That has won for you the name of amazon,
Plead loudly for your moderate request;
But to obey is like to cost my place.

CATERINA.

GOLD is effective when all else fails—
Here, take these ducats.

PAOLO.

My avarice consents,
And not my prudence: I'll stand outside,
For a space—a short space. (Exit L. 2. E.)

CATERINA.

(Consulting a letter) Octavian's note says,
The signal is "Dante"—to be spoken first,
By letters; then in full. Now to make trial:
(She speaks loudly) D—a—n—t—e—Dante!

(The seven panels in the rear wall open, an armed
man steps out of each aperture, the panels then close)

Note. To the Stage Mechanic.

Suggestion as to the mechanism of the "panel"
SCENERY.

The rear wall must have 7 apertures each 7
feet high by 2 1-2 feet wide. There must be
a separate section as long as the width of the
wall and 7 1-2 feet high, on which are painted
7 Knights, between each of which there is an
aperture 7 feet high by 2 1-2 feet wide. This
separate section is placed against the wall, with
the Knights, in its apertures. By sliding the
separate section sideways, its apertures will
meet the apertures of wall, and thus afford en-
trances, which will close by sliding back again.

CATERINA.

You know me—I am Caterina Sforza:
Friend to your master, Octavian Riario;
And hold this letter from him, just received.

(Shows letter)

ASSASSIN.

'Tis well he wrote; for he is a week gone:
Our food is nearly out; and you must think,
The circumscribed space back of this wall,
Admits of none too much air and light.

CATERINA.

This letter's date clears him of neglect:
Sent four days ago, it only reached me,
Through the hands of a bribed servitor,
To-day. But I forget! My listening guard,
Waits there: gag him tight and bind him too,
With this strip of bed-sheet.

ASSASSIN.

Four of us,

Are enough for that: you three come with me.
(They go out L. 2. E. and soon return)

CATERINA.

Well?

ASSASSIN.

The job is done,

CATERINA.

That's good, very good!

Enter Giovanni, R. 1. E. He recoils on seeing
them, and remains in entrance listening.

GIOVANNI.

Caterina with strange men! there's murder,
In their thoughts: I'll watch them.

CATERINA.

Now for the contents of Octavian's note,
He says, when he escaped from this Castle,
Just before its capture by Cesare Borgia,
That he purposely left you behind as spies:
Expecting to be able to release you soon.

ASSASSIN.

That was our compact.

CATERINA.

When this same Borgia,

After having robbed me of my Princedom,
Immured me in a dungeon underneath,
I at once appealed to my stanch ally;
And this answer, delayed as you know,
In the transmission, came to me.
This clause of the letter is significant.
"Kill the tyrant now: and make your escape,
All of you, by the servants quarters."

ASSASSIN.

Well,

Has he kept his word: and well, his bidding
Shall be done. That door, leads to the
Servants quarters. (Points where Giovanni is)
And there is an egress from them to street.

GIOVANNI.

So those cutthroats intend to butcher Cesare!
I must haste to his chambers and warn him.

CATERINA.

Get back now in your panel hiding place,
And when the situation's most opportune,
For Cesare's death; I'll give the signal.

ASSASSIN.

But, if his soldiers come here ere he does,
The gagged guard would make a revelation;
And you would be taken back to the fosse,
Not to be let out again.

CATERINA.

Then escape you,
And leave me to my fate. But never go,
Till you have slain the Borgia!

ASSASSIN.

Trust us,
To do that: and do it neatly.

2 ASSASSIN.

She might now, with our aid, (or alone)
Run past the gaping servants to a place
Of safety—and we return.

CATERINA.

Our enterprise,
Would be imperiled: no, I prefer to remain.

ASSASSIN.

If your signal come not: we will conclude
That your jail has swallowed you again:
And at midnight, seven ghostly shadows.
Shall be seen issuing hence; to enact
The tragedy, in Cesare's own apartments.

3 ASSASSIN.

We are familiar with all of the Palace:
This door—(He goes to R. 3. E.) opens into
A hall that leads to his rooms. Damnation!
Here come soldiers!

ASSASSIN.

D—a—n—t—e—Dante!

(Panels open, admitting men, and then close)

CATERINA.

Ha, ha! Their existence is mere oblivion.

(She comes Down to L. I.)
Enter Cesare, Giovanni, and Soldiers R. 3. E.

CESARE.

No one here but Caterina. Now Signora,
What has become of your confederates?

CATERINA.

What confederates?

CESARE.

Don't try to equivocate:
Giovanni here, saw you talking with some
Cutthroats.

CATERINA.

Why call them that?

CESARE.

Because,

It suits well with their vile occupation:—
They came here to assassinate me. Shrew,
Where are they? I demand an answer.

CATERINA.

Perhaps—

Mind you, I say perhaps— harlequin like,
They have vanished through the floor.

CESARE.

Waste no more words on the old termagent:
She is incorrigible. Go, search the castle,
In all parts, half of you: the other half,
Remain here to guard me.

(*Exeunt Soldiers, some at each entrance*)

CAPTAIN.

What shall be done to her?

CESARE.

Nothing just now:

She is to remain here, until the searchers
Return.

Re-enter a soldier with Paolo, L. 2. E.

SOLDIER.

We found him lying without in bonds; and
Broke them.

CESARE.

What means this Paolo?

PAOLO.

Assassins,

Infest the castle: and I firmly believe
That the Sforza here knows their hiding place.
They took me unawares: appearing, as if
By magic. She stared her eyes out once,
Gazing at those warriors back there.
By heavens! I have it. One of the panels,
That contain those figures, must lead to—
A secret passage!

CESARE.

Hah man, you amaze me!
I will have a look at them. (*He goes Up*)

CATERINA.

Such a thing, Paolo, as you speak of,
Is only found in fairy stories.

CESARE. (*comes Down*)

Humph!

Those panels are staunch and immovable,
As the solid rock: an integral part,
Of the massive woodwork.

(*Enter SOLDIERS, some at each entrance*)

Well minions! what have you to report?

SOLDIER.

Nothing, my Lord!

CESARE.

The vultures must have flown:
Probably by way of the servants part—
They were heard to mention it. Giovanni,
Go thou at once and leave my stern orders,
To have a stricter guard kept there.

GIOVANNI.

To hear,

(*Exit R. I. E.*)

The blare of a trumpet is heard.

CESARE.

Hark! the trumpet sounds a reveille! Mark,
How each man welcomes the metallic melody.
Sweet music—be it of instrument or voice,
Doth stir to exaltation. Cold listeners,
There will always be, whom our eloquence,
Can never move: but it is easy to SING,
One's way into every heart.

(*Enter a liveried Attendant, L. 2. E.*)

ATTENDANT.

My Lord, several royal personages, who
Call themselves rulers of Italian States.
But deposed by you, and warring against you—
Crave an audience.

CESARE.

The tyrant Condottieri!
Conduct them hither at once, with great pomp,
And ostentatious ceremony. But first,
That we may give them a right royal welcome:
Summon here the Lords and Ladies of our Court.

(*Attendant bows and retires, L. 2. E.*)

(*Re-enter CHARLOTTE and MACHIAVELLI, R. 3. E.*)

CHARLOTTE.

My dear husband, I have kept you waiting?

CESARE.

Just a little. It was my present intent,
To send for you: but happily you are come:
And Niccolo, too.

MACHIAVELLI.

Thanks be to your wife.

CESARE.

Our guests have arrived.

MACHIAVELLI.

'Tis well we came:
It would be a shame to keep Princes, waiting.

CESARE.

Now Charlotte, you and I will mount the throne,
Of the proud Octavian Riario, of Sinigaglia.
Niccolo, you keep on our right hand.

(CESARE seats CHARLOTTE and himself on throne, R. 2.)

CATERINA (aside)

O, the foul usurper; the cruel wretch;
Dares to ascend that throne: had I a knife,
I'd stab him where he sits!

Music: Enter two Attendants, L. 2. E. who, one on each side, hold back the portieres from the entrance: then enter another Attendant, L. 2. E.

ATTENDANT.

The most worshipful—The Lords and Ladies,
Of our Court! (Enter several couples of ladies and gents, who take places on either side of throne).

CESARE.

When rulers have soldiers at their command;
They like to use them: and the soldiers too,
Like to be used: therefore, it was agreed,
Between the coming visitors and ourself,
To have none present here on either side.
The soldiers will retire. (Exeunt Soldiers R. 3. E.)
Now sirrah, you may introduce our guests.

ATTENDANT.

It is my delightful duty to announce,
To your gracious Majesty, and your Court,
The presence of the illustrious Princes;
Who come here by your Majesty's invitation.
These august tyrants, being the leaders
Of their own soldiers, are also known as
Condottieri, or Generals.

(A flourish of trumpets)

SIGNORS:—

Freducci, tyrant of Fermo!
Baglioni, tyrant of Citta di Castella!
Della Rovere, tyrant of Pesaro!
Manfedi, tyrant of Faenza!
Malatesta, tyrant of Rimini!
Verano, tyrant of Camerino!
Bentivoglio, tyrant of Bologna!
Este, tyrant of Ferrara!
Ordelaffi, tyrant of Imola and Forli!
Regent for the imprisoned Sforza.
Riario, tyrant of Sinigaglia!

(The first tyrant enters L. 2. E. is announced as above, bows to CESARE and COURT, and goes to L. I. The others follow in quick succession one by one in the same manner. Attendants then drop the portieres, and with the announcing Attendant remain in the background).

CESARE.

Proud Lordlings! Cesare Borgia greets you all!
Though you and I have waged opposing warfare;
Yet now our thoughts are firmly bent on peace:
Which once ratified; into its crook'd scabbard,
Goes my sword: and bloody must be the quarrel,
That brings it out again.

FREDUCCI.

Lady! by your leave.
(He and the other TYRANTS bow to CHARLOTTE.)
Great Borgia! We are here, and come as friends!

In feathered hats and embroidered doublets,
You see us: and we also pant for peace.
Casqued and helmeted warriors no longer,
But with malice unbarbed and velvet garbed,
We come not as the lion, but the dove.
Yet, untrampled foes, or wavering friends,
Could make us take our weapons up again.
Spokesman am I for us all.

TYRANTS.

He is, he is!

Bravo, bravo!

CESARE.

Signors, from my deep heart,
I thank you! And we will drink your health,
In a glass of wine, anon.—Allow me, now,
To present to you Mr. Niccolo Machiavelli:
Author of the famous work on diplomacy,
Called "Principatibus."

TYRANTS.

Delighted! delighted!

BAGLIONI.

Yes, I am sure all of us ARE delighted,
To meet ITS author!

MACHIAVELLI.

And I, Signors, am glad!

Very glad to meet some of those Princes,
For whose damnation the book was written!

TYRANTS.

Hear! Hear!

MALATESTA.

Egad, Messer Machiavelli speaks,
Murderous thoughts, with an exquisite polish:
But his mighty prototype the devil,
Is renowned for that.

CESARE.

Sugar catches flies.

DELLA ROVERE.

The devil is always painted with horns;
But the Signor has raven locks instead:
And the devil's said to have cloven hoofs;
While he has shapely patent-leathered feet.

MACHIAVELLI.

Sir, you do me much honor.

CESARE.

Now with regard to the treaty.

BENTIVOGLIO.

I think,

We can soon agree on that.

TYRANTS.

Yes, amicably!

CESARE.

Here is my proposition. Each one of you,
To retain his territory, unmolested—
(But as feudatory of the Pope): provided,
That you pay your long overdue back taxes,
Into the Papal treasury.

MANFREDI.

Great Borgia!

You despoiled us of our lands; and placed
Your soldiers there: but thanks to our bands,
Of troops and mercenaries; we live in hopes,
To drive them out. Besides, in this castle,
You yourself are held fast prisoner:
Which is to our advantage. Nevertheless,
Your offer seems fair, and gets my favor.
What say you, Lordlings, shall we accept it?

TYRANTS.

Yes! Yes!

CESARE.

Thanks, thanks, noble Condottieri!

Now we can lay aside our war weapons;
And at once declare a general amnesty.
Ere you depart, I'll have my secretary,
Write down these promises made betwixt us;
And we will affix our signatures. Then
Has there been made—a solemn treaty.

MACHIAVELLI.

But,

A treaty is only a scrap of paper.

CESARE.

That is all: unless there be faith behind.—
Poor indeed, is that man, in whose promise
To keep faith, no trust can be reposed.

VITELLI.

Yet Princes are never to be trusted.
We would not have you trust us, nor will
You be trusted. Your words are honeyed now,
And so are ours. Is it strange that diplomats,
Can plead so well for Kingdoms; when lawyers,
Plead so sophistically for clients?

VERANO.

And,

Principatibus—which treats of Machiavellian
Diplomacy, has confirmed Princes in those
Vices, to which they were always more or less
Addicted.

MACHIAVELLI.

There is no gainsaying the truth,
That treaties are often violated:—
Still, Nations now do, and will continue
To make them.

CESARE.

A truce now to dull business:
Let us do justice to some delicacies,
In the banquet hall adjoining: just across
This corridor by which you entered.
Friends: please follow my Lady and myself.

(*Excunt L. 2. E. all but CATERINA and RIARIO: CESARE returning hastily, overhears RIARIO's first speech and hides in the folds of a portiere.*)

RIARIO.

Say, Caterina, how is it that Cesare's
Still alive!

CATERINA.

Simply on account of lack
Of opportunity. Your seven assassins,
Only await my signal, to rush forth
From their hiding place and kill him!

RIARIO.

Don't give that signal until I tell you:
The assassin Ordelaffi will do the trick;
And if he fails, we still have the others.

CATERINA.

Who is Ordelaffi?

RIARIO.

A cutthroat; whose service
Has been often brought into requisition.
When these Princes' contemplated visit here,
At Cesare's invitation, was not abandoned,
It became obvious that he was still alive.
What had interfered with my note's command?
I knew not: so determined to bring along
The assassin, to provide for emergencies.
Introduced under the pseudonym of regent,
The Princes know nothing of his character,
And would be loath to countenance the crime—
Yet will be glad when it is done.

CATERINA.

Octavian,

When I saw him sit on your throne, my anger
Knew no bounds.

RIARIO.

Well, have patience a while,
And all will be avenged. Hush—
(CESARE as though just entering, comes Down).

CESARE.

Your pardon, Caterina: and yours too,
Riario. When I recalled our prisoner
Was at large, I retraced my steps. Madam,
Be prisoner no longer, but join us all,
At yonder feast.

CATERINA.

I thank you kindly, Sir.

RIARIO.

Come, let me be your escort.

(*Excunt L. 2. E. CESARE following to entrance.*)

CESARE.

That was a lucky listening: but for that,
They would have had my life: and may now.
To flee this place is my only purpose:
But how to get Charlotte and Niceolo here?
Let me think:—ah, here comes an attendant.
(Enter ATTENDANT, L. 2. E.) Well, sirrah.

ATTENDANT.

My Lord, all the banqueters are asking,
Where is our host? and have sent me forth,
In quest of you.

CESARE.

Send Niccolo and my wife, here:
And crave the guests' indulgence for us three,
On the ground of necessity. Implore them,
In my name, to proceed with the carousal.
(ATTENDANT bows and retires, L. 2. E. CESARE
paces floor: enter CHARLOTTE, L. 2. E.)

CHARLOTTE.

What hath chanced?

CESARE.

Waste no time in queries:
Get Louise and yourself ready to depart,
And I will join you soon. There's danger here:
Yea, the very walls are full of it.

CHARLOTTE.

Danger!

Then duty bids me stay. You're angry now,
You stamp your foot: well, I obey dear,
And fear will lend me wings.

(Exit CHARLOTTE, R. 3. E. enter Mach. L. 2. E.)

CESARE.

Niccolo, are we safe from intrusion?

MACHIAVELLI.

Yes:

For a moment: but the hot-blooded Princes,
Are growing irascible: and Ordelaffi,
Swears that he will come to you.

CESARE.

Ordelaffi,

Is a trained assassin hired by Riario,
Unknown to the others, to murder me.
And seven other rascals are in hiding,
Awaiting a signal to spring upon me.
These seven mysteriously disappeared,
After plotting my death with Caterina,
A short half hour ago: there is no time
For further details.

MACHIAVELLI.

And who is Caterina?

CESARE.

A prisoner—whose liberty is prized by
The Princes: chancing to be here, I let
Her remain. On entering the banquet hall,
I recalled that she had been left behind:
Returning, I found her talking with Riario;
And heard my name mentioned. From the folds
Of a curtain, I listened to their plot.

MACHIAVELLI.

Well what are you going to do about it?

(Stroking his mustache)

CESARE.

There's but one thing to do: quit here now.
Charlotte has gone to prepare: we'll join her,
And go through the back way of the
Servants quarters.

MACHIAVELLI.

There's but one thing to do:
And it is NOT—to flee.

CESARE.

What is it, then?

MACHIAVELLI.

Be the executioner, and not the victim.
Summon your soldiers: beat down the Princes:
And over their prostrate and lifeless forms,
Stride to power!

CESARE.

No, no! I am weary,
Of this ever striving forcefully for
Fame and plunder.

MACHIAVELLI.

There is a still better way:
You forget the poison.

CESARE.

By heaven, yes!
That meditated sin, was effaced from my soul,
Before it festered, by the sweet faces
Of my wife and child: and then the Princes
Were so condescending.

MACHIAVELLI.

Why my dear fellow,
You are becoming childish. The best way,
You can become a good husband and father,
Is to make for yourself a name.

CESARE.

A name!

Can "a name" compensate a man for the loss,
Of all the finer qualities of the soul?

MACHIAVELLI.

Soul—is it possible that YOU have begun
To believe in that bugaboo.

CESARE.

Besides that,
I am a son of the Pope: Duke of Valentinois:
And the possessor of considerable wealth.

MACHIAVELLI.

These are but the stepping stones to glory!
Come, your answer?

CESARE.

Don't tempt me! I dare not!

(Enter ATTENDANT, L. 2. E.).

ATTENDANT.

My Lord—the Princes are coming in here.
The Lords and Ladies of your Court try
To restrain them: but I fear in vain.

CESARE.

Let them come! They will find the birds flown!
But sirrah, hold them back a little while,
To ensure our escape. Come, Niccolo.

(CESARE starts for R. 3. E. ATTENDANT for L. 2. E.)

MACHIAVELLI.

Hold! both of you! (To Attendant) You sir, Are greatly attached to your Master here; And would not falter when he asked you To do a hazardous service for him; which, Would touch your love, indeed?

ATTENDANT.

I would not.

MACHIAVELLI.

I thought as much. Well, this service you Can render him, strikes at his very life; And is not difficult for you. Your master Has a glass phial: get it from him. Cesare, Why do you hesitate?

CESARE.

Fiend, what deviltry, Are you hatching now?

(Gives Attendant the poison).

MACHIAVELLI.

The Princes will be here very shortly; And we will drink a roust to their health: Therefore, have a decanter of wine ready, When it is called for. What think you, Of emptying the contents of this phial, Into the wine? Mark you, I do not say To you—do it: I only SUGGEST it.

ATTENDANT.

Hah!—

Would it do them good?

MACHIAVELLI.

It would be good, For your royal master.

ATTENDANT.

Would it, my Lord?

CESARE.

O, I can't say.

MACHIAVELLI.

Hark! there's no time to lose: Speak out, man.

CESARE.

Heaven forgive me! Yes, yes!

ATTENDANT.

What is good for master, is good for them: I will do it.

MACHIAVELLI.

Then set about it straight. But, remember sirrah, on your own life, Serve the mixture to none but the Princes, And Caterina: but fail not to serve them. Have another decanter for the rest of us— But you are skilled in your catering; You know best how to do it. Now go.

(Exit ATTENDANT, R. I. E.)

CESARE.

To what depths I have fallen! And think too, This holocaust of poisoning is useless, With the doors unguarded: you have forgot, The seven assassins.

MACHIAVELLI.

I had thought of that, And of this way for protection 'gainst them. After the Princes once re-enter here, Guards must be placed at every entrance. When the drama is ended; these soldiers, Will enter and become your constant guard: Your duress will be short: the Princes down, The siege will soon be lifted, and you can Quit the castle.

CESARE.

Excellent, upon my soul! And if the villain Ordelaffi attack me, I hope to hold him off. Now to summon, The soldiers.

MACHIAVELLI.

Where are they? I will do that.

CESARE.

In the armory, adjacent to my rooms.

(Hoarse murmurs within).

MACHIAVELLI.

Hark! here come the Princes. Greet them well: Explain your absence with some monstrous lie: Your wife's friends called; affairs of state; Anything: ask them to sink all resentment, In a round of wine. I'm back in a trice.

(Exit MACHIAVELLI, R. 3. E.)

Enter Tyrants and Caterina, L. 2. E. followed by the "Court." During the Tyrants' dialogue, the court lines up beside the throne.

RIARIO.

Say what you will, his continued absence, Looks suspicious.

FREDUCCI.

Yet, he sent for his wife, And friend: and made good excuse.

ORDELAFFI.

I tell you,

He has given us the slip!

(Cries of "Yes, yes." followed by "No, no.")

BAGLIONI.

To those of you that doubt him, I would say: Know you not how oft stern duty, intrudes Its ugly self, to interfere with pleasure?

TYRANTS.

That's true, Baglioni.

MANFREDI.

And the Borgia is, ITS victim. And here he comes.

(Cesare makes believe to be entering, R. 3. E.)

CESARE.

My Lords—I have wronged you, and that fault,
Lies heavy on me.

RIARIO.

The affront, were it such,
Was a gross one: and some of our hot blooded,
Vented their wrath in unmeasured terms.

CESARE.

But Signors, you must forgive me, when you
Hear the facts. Some vital intelligence,
I need not tell you by whom communicated,
Made it almost imperative for me to leave
Sinigaglia at once. In my dire dilemma,
I summoned my wife and Messer Machiavelli,
To talk the matter over, and try to find
A way out of it.

TYRANTS.

Well, well, did you find one?

CESARE.

Yes, yes: or rather friend Machiavelli did.

TYRANTS.

What was it?

CESARE.

My Lords, after we have had,
A glass of wine together; you shall know,
All about it. Each one will be well taught,
Still another trick, of the perfidious
Machiavellian diplomacy. (Rings bell and Attendant
appears R. I. E) Some wine, ho!

(Exit Attendant) I am deuced thirsty:
And think, Gentlemen, I have not yet drank
With you.

TYRANTS.

We'll drink a bumper together!

ORDELAFFI.

Octavian, don't you touch the Borgia's wine:
It may be poisoned.

RIARIO.

Indeed, 'tis whispered,
That poison administered by him, caused
The death of Alfonso, Duke of Bisceglia;
His sister Lucretia's husband.
Enter two Attendants, R. I. E. each bearing a silver
salver filled with gold and silver cups of wine.
One serves the Princes and Caterina, and the other
serves Cesare and his Court. Cesare has just
mounted the throne.

CESARE. (rising)

Mighty Princes—Cesare Borgia, and his Court;
This ruddy nectar quaff; to your good healths,
And ever waxing joys!

MALATESTA.

The poetaster says:
While aching hearts at every feast are found,
There's ne'er a mourner when the wine goes round:
Hail! to Cesare Borgia, and his Court.

TYRANTS.

Hail!

(They drink: Atten. gather cups, and excent R. I. E.)

RIARIO. (aside)

Ordelaffi, that drink must have been drugged,
With a narcotic poison! my brain's on fire!

ORDELAFFI.

Thank my stars! I threw mine over my head.
I tried to spill the contents of your cup,
But you prevented me.

RIARIO.

I watched the rogues:
There was no tampering with the stuff, here.

ORDELAFFI.

But there was—there. (Pointing within)

VITELLI.

Zounds! I am as giddy, as a landlubber,
At sea in a storm: and my sight fails me.

DELLA ROVERE.

Signors' we are undone by villainy!
Let's bear it like men. If any escape,
Theirs be the revenge!

TYRANTS.

Revenge! Revenge!

BENTIVOGLIO

Convulsion wracked, my entire system is!
Now, a deathly stupor comes on.

VERANO.

These legs,

That bore me stiffy up on many a
Bloody field, now tremble underneath me.

COURTIER.

Piteous spectacle! What hideous distemper,
Hath overtaken them all?

COURT (separately)

Apoplexy--Epilepsy--

The plague--Poisoned!

COURTIER.

Turn we away our eyes,
From the lugubrious sight! (They talk together)

ORDELAFFI. (aside)

See the proud spirits, subdued by treachery,
One by one give up the ghost: now they
Are all fallen: I must play the possum,
And fall too. (He falls.)

CESARE. (comes Down)

Grewsome sight! There is not magic enough,
In a multitude of sensual pleasures,

To efface this murder from my consciousness.
And there are prosy details yet undone:
The bodies must be disposed of; and
Wagging and gossiping tongues silenced.

(During the progress of Cesare's speech above, Ordelaffi with drawn poignard crouches along the floor until he reaches Cesare, then rises and is about to stab him, when Machiavelli who has entered R. 3. E., and taken a poignard from a dead Tyrant, stabs Ordelaffi in the back, and he falls.)

MACHIAVELLI.

Confound it! I am really discomposed!
I didn't like to do that; I was forced to.
So—we that give out suggestions to crime; are
Sure at last to become PARTICEPS CRIMINIS.

CESARE.

Thanks Niccolo! That was a rare service;
And rendered just in the nick of time!
But what kept you so?

MACHIAVELLI.

Placing the soldiers,
To guard each door; I myself saw to it.
My absence seemed to harm you none; for
You did well! Very well! And stone dead,
Here lie a dozen of that ugly brood,
Dubbed with the lofty sobriquet of Princes;
Who claim that they hold a broad license
To do crimes, by virtue of a RIGHT DIVINE.

CESARE.

What's that noise?

MACHIAVELLI.

Groans! upon my life, groans!
Some one still lives! (They go to C. 2.)

CESARE.

It is Caterina! Her indomitable spirit,
Combats even the unconquerable death.
See, now she makes a superhuman effort,
Rises a little and speaks.

CATERINA.

Heaven help me:
And lend me strength to give the signal.
D—a—n—t—e—Dante! (She dies)
(The panels open, admitting the seven, then close)

CESARE.

What legerdemain is this! Walls hold men;
As well as having ears. Well Gentlemen?

ASSASSIN.

Cesare Borgia, your time has come!

CESARE.

Cutthroats,

What would you have of me?

ASSASSIN.

Only your life!

CESARE. (draws)

Then take it if you can.

(They surround Cesare, and Machiavelli is thus freed, and goes to L. 2. E. to call the Soldiers: the "Court" women are hysterical, and the "Court" men make ineffectual efforts to aid Cesare.)

MACHIAVELLI. (calls)

Soldiers! Soldiers!

CHARLOTTE. (enters R. 3. E.)

For God's sake! have mercy!
This man is my husband!

(Cesare falls, and she falls on him, as Soldiers enter L. 2. E. and pursue fleeing Assassins who try to escape by R. 1. E. but are confronted there by more soldiers, and arrested)

MACHIAVELLI.

Alas! I came as near to loving this man;
As is in my nature! Now he is dead:
And his widow weeps over him. He sought
To become, for the sake of his wife and child,
A good man. I prompted him to evil:
I was his bad counselor. Repenting not,
Of old sins, but committing new ones,
The Higher Power, as Marietta calls it,
Sends on me the second blow.
Ha, ha, ha! now for the third one!

(Curtain)

A C T

I V .

SCENE 1.—The Medicean Gardens at Florence.
The stage is set as loggia; with a low balustrade in the rear, in the centre of which is an open gateway: back of this is a vista of foliage flowers and statuary; a vineclad porch at R. 2. E. leads to Medici palace, (palace is out of sight) a public entrance at L. 2. E. a stand at C. 2., a few easy chairs. Music playing at intervals.

Enter MACHIAVELLI, LUCIA, and GUISEPPE, L. 2. E.

MACHIAVELLI.

Guiseppe—Lucia—behold the Medicean Gardens!
(They go Up, and gaze backwards)

LUCIA.

Entrancing! A bower of foliage and flowers.
Intermingled with divine statuary!

GUISEPPE.

The air,
Is redolent of perfume! smell it Lucia;
The woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the rose is blown.

(They go to R. 2. E. and gaze off R.)

LUCIA.

Guiseppe,
See, see, how the casement jessamine stirs,
To the music of flute and bassoon.

MACHIAVELLI.

That,
Is the Medici palace: and its vineclad porch,
Leads out here into this loggia.—
Leave me awhile: I would meditate.

(Guiseppe and Lucia come Down)

GUISEPPE.

The roses' red lure goes into my blood.
As the instruments clash in the hall:
That you too are dreaming of love is seen,
By your bosom's quick rise and fall.

LUCIA.

Love! I know naught of love: I am too young.

GUISEPPE.

You are fourteen: only three years my junior:
And besides, love is the very first thing,
That youth learns.

LUCIA. (archly)

Guiseppe, how can I learn,
Without a teacher?

GUISEPPE.

Lucia, let me teach you!

LUCIA.

Do you think it would be nice?

GUISEPPE.

Oh, SO nice!

LUCIA.

To walk the Gardens, would be nicer—come.

(Exeunt Guiseppe and Lucia, R. U. E.)

MACHIAVELLI. (gazing off R.)

There goes the damned Giuliano de Medici;
With a lady on his arm. Gibing aristocrat!
Would that I had the chance to make away
With him!

(Enter two servants, R. 2. E. with a shaft of marble
partly sculptured, they stand it L. 1.)

MACHIAVELLI.

What is that?

1 SERVANT.

A partly sculptured statue:
The shaft is from the Isle of Paros quarries.

MACHIAVELLI.

Ah! Parian marble.

(The Servants go out and return with an easel)

MACHIAVELLI.

What have you there?

2 SERVANT.

A nearly done picture,
By Il Divino—"the divine"

MACHIAVELLI.

Who the deuce,

Is Il Divino?

1 SERVANT.

Raphael, the great artist!
Here he comes; and Michael Angelo, too.

(They enter R. 2. E.)

RAPHAEL.

Dear Niccolo! pardon us for the delay:
We went to the palace to get our tools:
Vide—palette, paints, brushes, and stool.

MICHAEL.

And I have, a stool, chisel, and mallet.

MACHIAVELLI.

Do you work in this loggia?

RAPHAEL.

Quite often.
One must quit the dull studio sometimes,
To bask in nature's beauties!

MICHAEL.

Now that you are here—

But, Niccolo,

MACHIAVELLI.

Don't suspend, I pray:
It will be a rare treat to see you work!

RAPHAEL.

Just as you please.

(Raphael begins painting the picture, and
Michael begins carving the statue.)

MACHIAVELLI.

Michael, do you make a model?

MICHAEL.

Never:—
From the rude block to the finished statue,
'Tis my mind's conception that guides me.

MACHIAVELLI.

You cut away very rapidly.

MICHAEL.

The chisel's blow,
Often goes to within almost a hair's breadth,
Of the final surface.

MACHIAVELLI.

But if you cut too deep?

MICHAEL.

The statue is spoilt: no depth of regret,
Can undo the harm: the missing chips,
Can't be restored.

MACHIAVELLI.

Some of your blows are rough.

MICHAEL.

There is a divinity, which guides the hand,
Even when our strokes seem of the roughest.

MACHIAVELLI.

Of whom is the statue?

MICHAEL.

Of Giuliano de Medici.

MACHIAVELLI.

The devil!

RAPHAEL.

Why do you call on your double?

MACHIAVELLI.

To emphasize fury: besides I need his help,
Against this man. Twenty years ago, Piero,
His elder brother, was banished Florence,
And died shortly after. The domination,
Of the proud De Medici, over the Republic,
Seemed forever ended

RAPHAEL.

How quickly time passes:
A few months before Piero was banished
We met him at the great Lorenzo's funeral.
I was only nine then, Michael was eighteen,
And you Niccolo?

MACHIAVELLI.

Twenty three then: now
I am forty three.

MICHAEL.

And Cesare, was sixteen.
Poor Cesare! he is dead some years.

MACHIAVELLI.

He died,
Ten years ago. Albeit, I am not given,
To grief; I was utterly beside myself!
Happily, I found relief in distant scenes:
Being at once sent at my own request,
On diplomatic missions, to Maximilian,
The German Emperor: and to Louis XII,
Of France.

MICHAEL.

Long absent; and just reached home.

MACHIAVELLI.

Yes— to find too, to my much amazement,
Though advices had somewhat prepared me
For the catastrophe: to find Florence,
Under the heel of Giuliano de Medici:
The mighty "ten" proscribed; and their head,
The Gonfaloniere Soderini, in prison.

RAPHAEL.

And all this metamorphosis came about,
As follows. Giuliano's brother Giovanni,
Was chosen Pope; with the title of Leo X.
On being elevated to that high position,
He at once plotted to establish Giuliano,
As the Duke of Florence.

MACHIAVELLI.

And succeeded!
I have heard the damned story. Curse him,
"The Ten" have been deposed; and Niccolo
Has lost his heavy perquisites and place;
All owing to this spurious Duke of Florence!
I mean to do him harm: and to be frank,
It was largely that laudable purpose,
Which led me to accept your invitation,
To come here to-day.

RAPHAEL.

Oh, make the best of it:
Be happy.— Here comes Leonardo.

(Enter Leonardo and Ariosto, L. 2. E.)

LEONARDO.

My dear Michael, Raphael, and Niccolo!
Ariosto, and I will shake your hands:
Though we met to-day already. (They shake)

ARIOSTO.

It is an ill wind, indeed, that blows good,
To nobody: the Medici's return to power,
Has again thrown open this paradise,
To painters and poets.

MICHAEL.

If only we were
As good painters, as Ariosto is poet.

MACHIAVELLI.

Is he a Petrarch?

LEONARDO.

Two hundred years ago,
The immortal Dante, lived right here
In Florence; and wrote the "Divina Commedia."
Now we have another aspirant for fame,
In Ariosto here: with his "Orlando Furioso:"
An epic in forty cantos: wherein he tells,
Of the false and fickle maid Angelica:
Whose neglect caused the ardent Orlando,
To become NON COMPOS MENTIS.

RAPHAEL.

Forty cantos!
How could you ever write so much?

ARIOSTO.

By Jove!

My whole soul was in the thing: I felt like
Making it a hundred.

MACHIAVELLI.

To read it, then,
Would have made one as crazy as Orlando.

OMNES.

Ha, ha, ha!

LEONARDO.

Michael Angelo, here it was,
In this rustic loggia, that you carved,
Your "Venus de Medici."

ARIOSTO.

And such a statue!

Confound it, us poor poets are compelled,
To be content to excel at one thing:
Either the sonnet, or the epic: but
Leonardo and Michael are equally good
Sculptors and painters.

RAPHAEL.

You don't mention me:

I am only a painter.

ARIOSTO.

That's all Raphael:

You are a painter only: but said to be,
The best one that the world will yet produce.
What are you painting now?

RAPHAEL.

"The Transfiguration."

ARIOSTO.

Ah! that is a sublime subject.

MACHIAVELLI.

Come now—

What is the transfiguration? Enlighten me,
I pray you.

RAPHAEL.

Listen to this from the scripture.

"And after six days, Jesus taketh Peter, James,
and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a
high mountain apart.

"And was transfigured before them: and his face
did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as
the light."

MACHIAVELLI.

In other words, this same Jesus, was changed,
Into a heavenly state: but my dear fellow,
I don't believe in a heaven.

RAPHAEL.

Disbelief,

Of a thing, cannot obliterate the thing.
There is such a place: a divine region,
Entered only through the portals of death:
But loved while alive: and enjoyed in
Anticipation.

MICHAEL.

The most of us, sometime
In our lives, are taken on a mountain,
And shown glimpses of heaven. Perhaps never
Transfigured, as Jesus was, but transformed.
Some sudden joy, or some sudden sorrow,
Coming into our lives, will give to our
Fleshy faces, a touch of the divine.

MACHIAVELLI.

Humbug, sir, humbug.—(*He now sees Lucia and
Guiseppe, who had entered R. U. E. and are
standing at R. I.*) Jupiter look at
Lucia's face: it is fairly transformed!
What caused this marvelous change? Perhaps
Guiseppe has been making love to her.—
Why, Gentlemen, my own daughter, gives me
Ocular demonstration, of the truth of
Your contention.

LEONARDO.

That is your daughter, eh?
A sweet maid! Well, with her unconscious aid,
I trust that these two moralizers here,
Have made some impression on you.

MACHIAVELLI.

Yes, yes!

The exuberance of you all, is contagious:
You live in a world of joy and hope;
Where skepticism and pessimism are unknown.
I feel inclined to quit my evil ways,
Forever. My crooked life, hath brought me,
No profit.

(Enter an ATTENDANT, R. 2. E. bearing a silver
salver containing glasses of wine, and 2 gold cups
of wine: he sets it on a stand at C. 2.)

ATTENDANT.

His Grace—Giuliano de Medici: accompanied
By her Ladyship, the Duchess: is coming
In friendly greeting: to drink a bumper
Of wine together: and watch you awhile
At your work.

MICHIAEL.

The presence of their majesties,
We eagerly await!

(Exit ATTENDANT R. 2. E. others gather at C. 2.)

MACHIAVELLI. (aside)

Two golden cups—by heavens! these must be,
The Tyrant's and his Mate's: I will make sure.
Michael, here are two vessels of virgin gold,
Among the plainer glasses. Who gets these?
If they go by chance, lucky that two indeed,
Who quaff the ruby from their shining lips.

MICHAEL.

It is sacrilege to touch them even!
They are the Duke and Duchess' own private
Drinking mugs.

MACHIAVELLI. (aside)

His own private drinking mug—
Poison in his wine! that will fix him!
His wine: which is his? Lest he escape,
I must poison hers too. Alas! my good
Intents and thoughts, are but like obstacles,
That a stone meets in rolling down the hill.
I am ever going lower: first suggestor,
Then perpetrator—of crime.

(MACHIAVELLI covertly puts poison, in the 2 gold cups of wine, but is seen by ATTENDANT about to re-enter R. 2. E. who withdraws, and then enters).

ATTENDANT.

The Duke and Duchess De Medici!

(They enter R. 2. E.).

GIULIANO.

Friends all!—Please pardon this intrusion.
To look upon you sometimes while at work,
Has become such a rare treat: that either
By accident or design, we are often here.

MICHAEL.

We are the protegees; you the patrons.
By your gracious leave we have the entree,
Of this flowery paradise!

RAPHAEL.

The presence,
Of the Duchess and yourself, is a great
Condescension.

DUCHESS.

The Medicean Gardens,
Are my delight: and I like to see all
Lovers of the fine arts enjoy them!

GIULIANO.

Now Raphael, how do you progress with
"The Transfiguration?"

RAPHAEL.

Well, exceeding well!

My Liege.

GIULIANO.

And Michael here carves a statue,
Of ourself. Many a statue's famous for
The sculptor's art; and not the man himself:
But we intend to impress ourself upon
The times; and leave a name behind us.—
Your pardon, Signors, I had forgot the wine:
Come, join me!

(He takes gold cups, and hands one to Duchess).

ATTENDANT.

Don't touch it, your Grace!
It may be poisoned!

GIULIANO.

What mean you, sirrah?

ATTENDANT.

I must speak out, even at the risk of
Incurring your displeasure. (Points at MACH.)
The Signor, took something from his pocket,
Split it in two, and then held his hands
Over the royal cups. They must be drugged:
If they are not, I humbly crave your mercy,
And his pardon.

DUCHESS.

Taste it not, Giuliano dear!

Neither will I.

GIULIANO.

Let's proceed to sift the thing:
What can you say, Sir?

MACHIAVELLI.

It is preposterous!

GIULIANO.

We will soon see. Take the two cups outside,
And pour the whole contents down the throats,
Of two dogs. Let me know the result of
The experiment.

(Exit ATTENDANT with the 2 cups, R. 2. E.)

MICHAEL.

Your Grace, our hearts are so well attuned,
To your long continued health; that he, who
Strikes at you, hurts us!

RAPHAEL.

'Tis a heinous charge!
And the accused, one of our party.

GIULIANO.

We,
Blame you not: the best of friends go wrong.

(Enter some SOLDIERS, R. 2. E.)

1 SOLDIER.

My Liege—the Attendant who just left here,
Ordered us to your august presence.

GIULIANO.

You may remain.

(Re-enter ATTENDANT with empty cups, R. 2. E.)
Well sirrah, what is your report?

ATTENDANT.

Your Grace—
We took two dogs, and gave a cup to each;
And—

GIULIANO.

Why do you hesitate? speak out man.

ATTENDANT.

And they both died.

GIULIANO.

Damnation! dead say you!
Soldiers, arrest this man.

(MACHIAVELLI is seized, LUCIA clings to him).

LUCIA.

O, Papa! Papa! they shall not harm you.

GUILIANO.

Now sir, perhaps you will give some reason,
For the making of this treacherous attack,
Upon our life: what do you say?

MACHIAVELLI.

Nothing.

GUILIANO.

Lock him up in the dungeon of the palace:
He shall be given the torture: that will
Make him speak! (Exeunt R. 2. E.)

SCENE II.—Machiavelli's Cell, in the dungeon of the Medici Palace. Gloomy and bare: a lamp suspended from ceiling; a small table at R. I. a rope runs over a pulley in the ceiling, with the ends hanging down near to floor at C. 2.; a pair of handcuffs, a heavy weight, and a high stool, are on the floor, nearby; an iron-grating door at B. 2. E.

(Discovered MACHIAVELLI, reading.)

MACHIAVELLI.

"What profiteth it a man, if he gain the whole world,
and lose his own soul?"
I read from the Bible: the book of books:
That these Christians prate so much about.
Fine literature! very fine literature!
But there is many a fable extant, too,
That has been most wondrously related.
"Take this book and read it." said the Priest,
"It will do you good." (Drops book, and rises)
Am I awake, or dreaming? What! the slick,
Niccolo Machiavelli, a prisoner here,
In the gloomy dungeon of the De Medici.
By Jove! it is no joke to be in limbo:
'Tis easy to commit crimes with impunity,
But quite another thing to be detected.
Soon to be, too, a victim of "the question":—
That cruel torture, will extract confession:
And confession means the axe. Deuce take it,
I am in the doldrums! Oh, that some trifles
Might occur, to cheer me up!

(Enter COURT BUFFOON, dressed in motley, B. 2. E.)

BUFFOON.

Fool! wise man! fool! wise man!

MACHIAVELLI.

Buffoon,

Why do you balance the bawble on your
Finger's end?

BUFFOON.

Weighing—the fool's follies,
Against the wise man's.

MACHIAVELLI.

What is the result?

BUFFOON.

The fool wins in hollow fashion. The fool,
Is a fool only by profession: the wise man,
Is a fool natural born.

MACHIAVELLI.

Gibing jester!

What has this to do with me?

BUFFOON.

You are wise,—
Because none other could have invented,
The world's perfidious diplomacy. A fool,—
You were, to begin your rouqueries with
A great crime, instead of a small one. You,
Who had never been in the stocks even,
Thought you could endure the terrible rack.

MACHIAVELLI.

Is the rack so bad?

BUFFOON.

Ask the poor victims,—
Those that luckily survived its pains.
The "vertical rack"—the one used here,
Is the worst yet.

MACHIAVELLI.

O, horrors! what is that?

BUFFOON.

See this rope here, hanging from a pulley,
In the ceiling. You will be handcuffed;
And the handcuffs fastened to the rope:
Then you will be yanked up to the highth,
Of this tall stool; on which you will stand.
After a heavy weight is tied to your feet;
The stool will be kicked from underneath,
And you will—dangle in the air.—Do you
Like the picture?

MACHIAVELLI.

Horrible, most horrible!
I dare not contemplate the outcome.

BUFFOON.

Bones,

Are sure to be broken: and you may split,
If you cannot stretch. The last victim,
Went up—short, fat: came down—long, lean.

MACHIAVELLI.

Idiot! your witless gibes, pass unnoticed:
I am in no mood for them. My very vitals,
Are terror frozen; my mind, distracted:
The reckless—cynical—demoniacal,
The bold—fearless—supernatural
Machiavelli, is scared, is frightened:
All my self-sufficiency, is leaving me:
I begin to feel the need, the utter need,

Of some power, much greater than myself,
To soothe me, to sustain me, in this
Dire extremity!

(Enter GIULIANO, 2 SOLDIERS, and a RECORDER,
B. 2. E.)

GIULIANO.

Soldiers, prepare the prisoner for the
Torture: and recorder, sit you there at
Yonder table, and jot down "the questions"—
And what reply he makes to them.

(The RECORDER sits at table and takes out writing
utensils: the Soldiers put the handcuffs on Machi-
avelli and fasten them to the rope: pulling the other
end of the rope, they raise him from the floor, and
fasten it so as to keep him there: the high stool is
placed under his feet and he stands on it: the heavy
weight is then attached to his feet.)

GIULIANO.

Now, knock away the stool!

(They do: MACHIAVELLI dangles in air C. 2.
RECORDER sits R. I.; GIULIANO stands L. I.)

MACHIAVELLI.

Have mercy!

GIULIANO.

You are accused of crime:
How plead you to the charge?

MACHIAVELLI.

I am innocent!

GIULIANO.

Lies will avail you nothing: you shall hang,
Till the truth is told.

MACHIAVELLI.

Have mercy! have mercy!

GIULIANO.

Do you confess your guilt?

MACHIAVELLI.

Yes, O God, yes!

GIULIANO.

Suspend the torture! (The stool is replaced)
Some questions must be asked: if he answer
Not to the purpose; it shall be resumed.

MACHIAVELLI.

Alas! my wrists and ankles are dislocated!

GIULIANO.

First—had you any accomplices?

MACHIAVELLI.

None, none.

GIULIANO.

This dastardly attempt upon our very life:
What moved you villain, to commit the deed?
Wherein have I wronged you?

MACHIAVELLI.

Not me, but Florence!
You set aside the Republic, for a Dukedom:
And proscribed the mighty "Ten"—I was,
Their Secretary!

GIULIANO.

No personal enmity?

MACHIAVELLI.

We scarcely ever met before: your Grace,
Was known to me only by reputation.

GIULIANO.

Your offence is political; not personal:—
Nevertheless, you must die.—Recorder,
Have you set it all down?

RECORDER.

I have your Grace.

GIULIANO.

Then take him down.—I will send the Priest,
To administer the last sad Church rites,
After that, these soldiers will shoot him,
In the prison courtyard.

(MACH. is freed from the torture apparatus:
Exeunt GIULIANO and the RECORDER, B. 2. E.)

BUFFOON.

I shall remain:

But not to crack jokes.

1 SOLDIER.

Why not joke, fool?

BUFFOON.

Because the prisoner won't laugh: and his
Failure to do so, will be ascribed to
My lack of wit; and not to the occasion.

2 SOLDIER.

Poor devil! he was forced to sit down,
Or he would have fallen: his piteous state,
Has little of mirth—but plenty of pain.

(Enter PRIEST, B. 2. E. he takes one of two chairs
which had been brought to C. 2. MACHIAVELLI has
the other.)

PRIEST.

I am so glad!—You have confessed the crime,
And that paves the way for repentance.

MACHIAVELLI.

Repent!—That word falls like a death knell,—
On a buoyant heart!

PRIEST.

Not at all. To repent,
Is not to banish joy, but banish that,
Which interferes with joy.

MACHIAVELLI.

My heart is LEAD!
For I must die—and return to dust.

PRIEST.

"Dust,

Thou art, to dust, returnest"—was not spoken
Of the soul.

MACHIAVELLI.

Now, what is that?

PRIEST.

The soul,

Is an ego, that makes immortality.
The soul, is a spiritual, undefinable,
Essence, divine in its elements, that
Rewards or punishes its possessor,
After death. It can be preserved by a
GOOD Life, or may be lost by a BAD one.

MACHIAVELLI.

Punishes its possessor after death!—

(Machiavelli is terrified, and rising comes Down,
followed by Priest.)Those words fill me with terror! terror!
Are you sure of this? What proof have you?

PRIEST.

No better proof is needed, than the Poet's:
Who voices the wisdom of the ages,
On the subject:—listen.When coldness wraps this suffering clay,
Ah, whither strays the immortal mind?
It cannot die, it cannot stay,
But leaves its darken'd dust behind.
Then, unembodied, it doth trace
By steps each planet's heavenly way;
Or fill at once the realms of space,
A thing of eyes, that all survey.Eternal, boundless, undecay'd,
A thought unseen, but seeing all;
All, all in earth or skies display'd,
Shall it survey, shall it recall:
Each fainter trace that memory holds
So darkly of departed years,
In one broad glance the soul beholds,
And all that was at once appears.Before creation peopled earth,
Its eyes shall roll through chaos back;
And where the farthest heaven had birth,
The spirit trace its rising track.
And where the future mars or makes,
Its glance dilate o'er all to be,
While sun is quench'd or system breaks,
Fix'd in its own eternity.Above or love, hope, hate, or fear,
It lives all passionless and pure:
An age shall fleet like earthly year;
Its years as moments shall endure.
Away, away, without a wing,
O'er all, in all, its thoughts shall fly,—
A nameless and eternal thing,
Forgetting what it was to die.

(This sublime poem, is by Byron: and was written centuries after the time of this play. The

mere reference to the anachronism, and the name of the author, seems to leave nothing more to be said.)

MACHIAVELLI.

Beautiful! inspiring! logical! convincing!
By heaven! I believe that he is right.
It must be so: poet thou reasonest well:
Else why these fond desires; these longings
After immortality.—Good Priest, say,
What can I do to escape, to avoid, the
Eternal torment!

PRIEST.

"Though your sins be scarlet,
You can be washed as white as snow."

MACHIAVELLI.

How! how!

PRIEST.

Humbly and penitently pray to the Lord:
Asking his forgiveness. Get on your knees,
And pray it silently.

(They both kneel and pray inaudibly)

Enter GIULIANO, B. 2. E.

GIULIANO.

I just received word from my brother,
Pope Leo X, that he has condoned the faults,
And pardoned the past offences, of all
Political prisoners. Signor Machiavelli,
Thanks be to his Holiness' clemency,
You are a free man: but you are banished,
From Florence.

MACHIAVELLI.

Ha, ha, ha!—

(He prances around with elation)

The devil got sick,

The devil a monk would be:

The devil got well,

The devil a monk was he!

(Curtain)

SCENE III.—Sitting Room of Machiavelli's Home in Florence. A large bookcase full of books stands against the rear wall at R., a portable closet stands against the rear wall at L., The bronze figure of Atlas bearing the world stands "covered up" in the corner at R., the skeleton stands "covered up" in the corner at L., a table with a "burning" torch lamp on it and books on it at C. 2., a lounge at L. I. with its head near the wall and running crossways of the stage: a few easy chairs: an open glass casement at B. 2. E. lead into the veranda: a door at R. 2. E., a door at L. 2. E. leads into a bedchamber.

(Enter MARIETTA, L. 2. E.)

MARIETTA.

Niccolo, lies white and thin, with his eyes,
Staring into vacancy: he is much worse.
(Weeps) O, I am going to lose my husband!
Dear Giuseppe, Lucia, and the children,
Ought soon be here:—and the physician, too.
It will ease my mind, to have him come;
Even though he sends him away again,
As he did only yesterday.—“Sick man,
Heal thyself”; he murmurs: and then mixes,
And swallows his own remedies.

(Enter Giuseppe, Lucia, Cesare, and Mignon, R. 2. E.)

LUCIA.

Dear mother!

MARIETTA.

My own Lucia and Giuseppe!
And darlings, Mignon and Cesare, too!

CESARE & MIGNON.

Dear Grandmother! (They all embrace)

LUCIA.

How is Father?

MARIETTA.

Very bad: and growing worse:—
It is well that you are here.

GIUSEPPE.

Your letter,
Came to hand this morning: we left Milan,
Soon as transit could be procured.

MARIETTA.

Niccolo,

Lies in that bedchamber. The tide of life,
Is ebbing—we had best go in: the children,
Can see him later.

(Exeunt Marietta, Lucia and Giuseppe, L. 2. E.)

MIGNON.

Cesare, put up your sword: don't draw it here,
Grandfather is sick!

CESARE.

It makes no difference:
I want to be a soldier: like my namesake,
Cesare Borgia. Mignon, you play the enemy:
And I will attack you.

(He charges, they scuffle, and both fall)

MIGNON. (angrily)

I do not see why they ever name boys,
After such bad men!

CESARE.

Boys don't have to
Be bad just because their namesakes were.
Cesare Borgia died long ere I was born:
He may have been bad, for he was a friend
Of Grandfather. That was only fun, dear:
Come let us make up!

MIGNON.

Your kiss, I return,
As a sweet token of peace: dear brother,
I can't be angry at you:—wasn't it funny,
How we both went down? ha, ha!

CESARE.

Ha, ha, ha!

(Re-enter GIUSEPPE and LUCIA, L. 2. E.)

LUCIA.

Mignon, Cesare, come here:—Dear grandfather,
Is sick abed: be very gentle with him.

(Exeunt Cesare and Mignon, L. 2. E.)

LUCIA.

O, poor dear father! (sobs) I fear that his
Recovery is very doubtful. What think you,
Giuseppe?

GIUSEPPE.

Death hath set its pallid seal,
On his face: he is a doomed man,

LUCIA.

Sometimes,

I feel that he never outgrew the horror,
Of the Medici dungeon torture.

GIUSEPPE.

That was,

Fifteen years ago.

LUCIA.

Fifteen years since then!
On that day you first spake to me of love.

GIUSEPPE.

As we traversed the Medicean Gardens.

LUCIA.

The Medicean Gardens! Entrancing place!
Beautiful flowers, foliage, statuary!
That day will always live in my memory.
What does the poet say? Ah, I have it—
“I gazed—and gazed—but little thought,
What wealth the sight to me had brought:
For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye,
Which is the bliss of solitude.”

GIUSEPPE.

Three years thereafter, we were married:
And the fruit of that union, is twofold:
Cesare, aged eleven: and Mignon, nine:—
Just think of it.

LUCIA.

But you love me yet, dear!

GIUSEPPE.

The lapse of time, adds strength to my ardor:
Lovers, then—now—forever! (Embrace)

(Re-enter MARIETTA, CESARE, and MIGNON, L. 2. E.)

MARIETTA.

He just noticed the children, and then
Relapsed into his preoccupation again.

GUISEPPE.

When was he first taken?

MARIETTA.

About a week ago.
Returning home from a long absence, ailing;
He at once became worse. A noted Doctor,
Was called; but he ignored his prescriptions,
And proceeded to treat himself. Growing
Still worse, the Doctor was recalled: but,
With a like result.

LUCIA.

Mamma, you remember the uncanny things,
He used to have in his laboratory?
How they frightened me as a child, and
Even after I grew up!

MARIETTA.

He has them still.
Banished from Florence, for the attempt
On the life of the De Medici, he left,
And I stayed: the laboratory was shut:—
You are familiar with all this?

LUCIA.

I am,
For we were together then: it was not till
Three years after that Guiseppe wed me.

MARIETTA.

And remained shut, until we removed
To these present apartments: which we did,
(as you also remember) upon his return,
After an absence of nearly eight years.
He had no laboratory here; unless
This sitting room might be considered so:
That closet, contains drugs and appliances,
And there, with coverings thrown on them,
Stand the world-bearing Atlas, and the
Skeleton.

LUCIA.

This disagreeable subject,
Passed out of my mind on leaving home:
When visiting you, I never thought of
Alluding to it: but your telling of
Father's madman notion, to take his own
Medicine, brought it back to memory.

MARIETTA.

Come—let me conduct you to your chambers:
Where you can brush up; and then return.
I must not leave him long alone.

(She turns down the lamp: *exit R. 2. E.*)

(Enter MACHIAVELLI, L. 2. E.)

MACHIAVELLI.

Death! Death! No, I can not, dare not, die!
And go to that undiscovered country.
"All that tread the earth are but a handfull

To the tribes that slumber in its bosom."
From that multitude of unwilling explorers,
Not one has ever returned, to relate,
What they saw. Cynical, vaunting skeptic:
"Death ends all;" I have always contended:
But now, in its majestic presence; I feel
Too small—too puny—to attempt to fix,
The limitations of its mysteries!
O God! that awful torture!—And the dread
Of being shot! which would have been done
In a minute. I shall never get over it:
Fifteen years ago—but just as vivid,
As though it were yesterday.—I am changed:
I used to be confident and resolute
In my skepticism, cynicism, infidelity:
But now there are times when I doubt—when
I waver: the dread of something after death,
Scares me:—There is nothing like suffering—
To resurrect a dead conscience. (*He muses*)
Perhaps after all—to repent, is best:
But that must be thought out afterwards,—
The vital, the crucial thing now, is—life!
I will not die!—But live: and get well!
This dosing of myself with noxious physics,
Has accomplished naught: the magnet helmet,
And the elixir compound is the last hope.

(*He goes to closet and comes back with a dose of Elixir in a glass, and the Helmet: puts on helmet.*)

MACHIAVELLI.

This magnet helmet, did wonders for the
Old man: it ought to do more for me.
It will re-unite the two life forces:
Which this deathly sickness shows to be
Now almost irreconcilable. (*A pause*)
Upon my soul! it makes me young again!
I feel like a new man!—Now for the elixir;
That future segregation may be prevented.
This is the stuff that killed the old man:
(And got me in a peck of trouble too;
But a post-mortem scrutiny found nothing,
And the scandal blew over:) Peradventure,
It may kill me:—No, no, I will not
Think it: he was an octogenarian—eighty:
And I am only fifty eight. (*He drinks*)
The devil! it is bitter as colocynth!
I swoon—I die—Help! Help! (*He falls*)

Enter Marietta, Lucia, Guiseppe, Cesare, and
Mignon, R. 2. E. Machiavelli is carried to lounge
L. 1. The Helmet is removed, and after making the
speech below, he swoons.

MARIETTA.

Run for a doctor, quick!

MACHIAVELLI.

No! send for a priest!

MARIETTA.

Go Guiseppe: he lives next to the Church,
At the corner: anyone can direct you.

(Enter PRIEST and DOCTOR, R. 2. E.)
The Saints be praised! here is the Priest,
And the Doctor, too.

DOCTOR.

His Reverence and I,
Met just outside: on learning of sickness,
Comiseration flooded his pious mind.

(*Makes professional examination*)
The patient has swooned, and is in a
COMA.

MARIETTA.

He was in bed: we left the room,
For a few minutes: a loud cry of "help"
Brought us back, to find him on the floor;
With this helmet on; and a broken glass
Near by.

DOCTOR.

Strange nightcap for an invalid!
It is full of magnets. This shock was bad:
But not bad enough to account for his
Present condition.

PRIEST.

See, the dear fellow speaks!

MACHIAVELLI.

Oh, oh! my heart, my heart!

DOCTOR.

What did you take?

MACHIAVELLI.

A mixture of mercury sulphur and brimstone.

DOCTOR.

That accounts for his enigmatical state:
It has paralyzed the heart.—Sad things,
Must be revealed sometimes: the patient
Is dying,—nothing can be done for him.
I will turn him over to the good Priest.

(*MARIETTA, LUCIA and GUISEPPE weep, MIGNON and CESARE gaze with dilated eyes*).

MACHIAVELLI.

Dying! say you!—Holy father, what must I do?

PRIEST.

Repent! repent!

MACHIAVELLI.

But, deathbed repentance,
Avails naught.

PRIEST.

While the lamp holds out to burn,
The vilest sinner may return.

MACHIAVELLI.

There is hope!

DOCTOR.

Lost souls are saved at all stages of life,—
Even on deathbeds: but it is best to
"Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth."

MACHIAVELLI.

All men said that I resembled the devil:
And I presume that I have been doing
His work throughout my life. But how is one
To know the devil's work from the Almighty's?

PRIEST.

The Bible is the only guide.

MACHIAVELLI.

Then it was
The devil's sure enough: for I never
Looked at the Bible, except to pick flaws.
Studiois in the occult and supernatural:
Hating good, and loving evil: promoting
Wickedness with a keen relish: (psychologists
have yet to discover, why any one should
delight in sin:) This is my record.

PRIEST.

Truly,
A bad one. Did you never feel compunctions
Of conscience?

MACHIAVELLI.

Only once: long years since—
When tortured; and condemned to death:
On my return to political favor again,
I fell back into my old evil ways:—
The conversion was not lasting.

PRIEST.

Cheer up!
They rarely ever are at the first attempt;
But the second, will transform you. Good sir,
Do you humbly and penitently ask the Lord,
To forgive you, and to wash away your sins?

MACHIAVELLI. (*prays*)

I humbly and penitently ask the Lord
To forgive me, and wash away my sins.

PRIEST.

Amen!—

DOCTOR.

Now, compose yourself. (*A pause*)
The patient seems to be relapsing into
A COMA again. (*They cross to R.*)

MIGNON.

Mamma, dear Grandpa will get well, won't he?

LUCIA.

I hope so, darling!

CESARE.

Oh, how I pity him!
Why they say that when he was much younger,
He was the handsomest man in all Italy:
And now his face is white as chalk.

GUISEPPE.

Snow.
My boy, is pure—even though colorless.

LUCIA.

Hush! he stirs—he speaks.

MACHIAVELLI.

Ah! the eternal plan,

Is dawning on me: the spirit leaves the body,
And goes to abide with God: whilst nature,
Absorbs the body into its purifying self.—
Show me the skeleton!—

DOCTOR.

If you have such,
Let him see it: 'tis well to humor him.

(MARIETTA uncovers *Atlas* and *Skeleton*: sets the former at R. 3. and the latter at L. 3. The skeleton nods).

MACHIAVELLI.

Hah! if thou canst nod.

Speak, too; and tell why thou standest there:
When thy natural home is in the sepulchre!

(*The illusion of the Atlas-borne world's illumination by the moonlight is produced again same as Act I, Scene II*)

Look, look! the moon, lights up the globe!
The sorceress has some new revelation:
Future events cast their shadows before.
Turn it around, that I may gaze upon it.

(MARIETTA turns globe so that he sees the countries in the order in which he speaks of them).

O God! there's blood on it everywhere!
France—England—Germany—Austria—
Italy—Russia—at war with each other:
Humanity, running rivers of blood! and
Property, blighted by devastation!—
And all my fault!

PRIEST. (crosses to Mach.)

How can YOU be to blame?

MACHIAVELLI.

It will be the offspring of my writings:—
I wrote the book *Principatibus*—“To Princes:”
The Machiavellian diplomacy of perfidy.

PRIEST.

What made you write it?

MACHIAVELLI.

Out of the lusts,

Of the flesh, we create a Frankenstein:
Some human caricature of Divine images:
And the horrible monster stalks abroad;
Committing crimes even long after we
Are dead:—No, no, the Lord won't forgive me!

PRIEST.

He will forgive you—He has forgiven you;
If your contrition is real. And your deeds,—
He can make them redound to His glory.

MACHIAVELLI.

But, Holy Father, *Principatibus* teaches
The great Nations, to use the petty “force:”
And not the mighty “love:” To make, and use,
The weapons of rapine and bloodshed.

PRIEST.

Those,

Who use the instruments of darkness: God,
Will turn their own weapons against themselves.

MACHIAVELLI.

Good Priest—your lofty words reassure me:
Make me calm and confident.—Now, Marietta,
Give me my book of poetry.

(*She gives him book which she takes from table at C. 2.: he opens it and becomes immersed in contents, during which she speaks the lines below, then he puts the book aside, and begins to repeat one of its poems from memory.*)

MARIETTA.

He has taken a great liking to a poem,
In that book: it is entitled “The Grave:”
And treats of a man, who weary of life;
Is talking aloud to himself about death;
When “the grave” appears and talks to him.
He has read it so much that he knows it
By heart: and sometimes repeats parts of it
While in bed. Look! he puts the book aside,
And begins to repeat it from memory.

MACHIAVELLI.

There is a calm for those who weep,
A rest for weary pilgrims found;
They softly lie and sweetly sleep
Low in the ground.

The storm that wrecks the winter sky
No more disturbs their deep repose
Than summer evening's latest sigh
That shuts the rose.

I long to lay this painful head
And aching heart beneath the soil,
To slumber in that dreamless bed
From all my toil.

For misery stole me at my birth,
And cast me helpless on the wild;
I perish;—O my mother Earth,
Take home thy child.

On thy dear lap these limbs reclined,
Shall gently moulder into thee;
Nor leave one wretched trace behind
Resembling me.

Hark!—a strange sound affrights mine ear,
My pulse,—my brain runs wild,—I rave:
—Ah! who art thou whose steps I hear?

(Spectre)

I am the Grave!

(*The Spectre enters B. 2. E. and steals Down to the foot of the sofa on which Machiavelli lies with his face front: when he recites “Ah! who art thou whose steps I hear?” he with great effort raises his head and turns his gaze towards the foot of the sofa, thus seeing the spectre, who recites “I am the Grave!” With bulging eyes Machiavelli watches it while it speaks the balance of the lines of*)

the poem, *(these lines follow just below,) and then disappears. The Spectre is nothing but a stage representation of Machiavelli's delirium, and therefore is not seen or heard by the other players, but only by the audience.)

SPECTRE.

The grave that never spake before,
Hath found at last a tongue to chide :
Oh listen!—I will speak no more :—
Be silent pride!

Art thou a wretch of hope forlorn,
The victim of consuming care?
Is thy distracted conscience torn
By fell despair?

Do foul misdeeds of former times
Wring with remorse thy guilty breast?
And ghosts of unforgiven crimes
Murder thy rest?

Lashed by the furies of the mind,
From Wrath and Vengeance wouldest thou flee?
Ah! think not, hope not, fool, to find
A friend in me.

By all the terrors of the tomb,
Beyond the power of tongue to tell;
By the dread secrets of my womb;
By Death and Hell:

I charge thee live!—repent and pray,
In dust thine infamy deplore;
There yet is mercy—go thy way,
And sin no more.

Whate'er thy lot,—whoe'er thou be—
Confess thy folly, kiss the rod,
And in thy chastening sorrows see
The hand of God.

A bruised reed He will not break;
Afflictions all his children feel;
He wounds them for His mercy's sake,
He wounds to heal.

Humbled beneath His mighty hand,
Prostrate, His Providence adore:
"Tis done!—Arise! He bids thee stand,
To fall no more.

Now, Traveller in the vale of tears
To realms of everlasting light,
Through Time's dark wilderness of years,
Pursue thy flight.

There is a calm for those who weep,
A rest for weary Pilgrims found;
And while the mouldering ashes sleep
Low in the ground:

The Soul, of origin divine,
God's glorious image, freed from clay,
In heaven's eternal sphere shall shine
A star of day.

The sun is but a spark of fire,
A transient meteor in the sky;
The Soul, immortal as its Sire,
SHALL NEVER DIE!

(EXIT SPECTRE B. 2. E)

MACHIAVELLI.

Did you see him! "The Grave"—personified!
Did you see him? did you hear him?

MARIETTA.

(Crosses to Mach) Dear Niccolo, be composed!
No, no, we saw no one, we heard no one.—

(A pause, during which Mach becomes composed:
Marietta crosses to the others at R.)

LUCIA.

What did he mean, Mother, by saying that?

MARIETTA.

His fixed stare, and rapt attention,
So long, indicate that he thought some one,
Had appeared, and was talking to him.
Perhaps his delirium made the poem real.

MACHIAVELLI.

Good-bye dear wife—Lucia—Guiseppe—
Cesare—Mignon—Good-bye!

(They gather around him lovingly—a long pause)
Thank God! I have found peace at last. (Dies)

(CURTA'N)

*NOTE.—The "Poem" quoted above, is by James Montgomery—and was written long after the time of this play. It was used because it seemed peculiarly applicable to the occasion.

LENGTH OF PLAY.

This "play" contains 2500 lines of "speaking matter." In order to get the proper results, it should be played in full—that is without any abridgment: which can be done in two and three quarter hours: a very fair time for a stage production. Its somewhat extended length, as evidenced by the number of pages, is caused not by the number of "speaking lines"—but by the amplitude of scenic descriptions, and stage directions.



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